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PERLYCROSS.

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CHAPTER X.

IN CHARGE.

"My young friend, I must get up," Mr. Penniloe exclaimed, if so feeble a sound could be called an exclamation. "It is useless to talk about my pulse, and look so wise. Here have I been perhaps three days. I am not quite certain, but it must be that. And who is there to see to the parish, or even the service of the church, while I lie like this? It was most kind of you (I have sense enough to feel it) to hurry from your long ride, without a bit to eat; Mrs. Muggridge said as much, and you could not deny it. But up I must get; and more than that, I must get out. It will soon be dark again, by the shadows on the blind, and I am sure that there is something gone amiss, I know not what. But my duty is to know it, and to see what I can do. Now go and have some dinner, while I just put on my clothes."

"Nothing of that sort, sir, will you do to-day. You are weaker than a cat,—as that stupid saying goes. That idiot Jackson has bled you to a skeleton, put a seton in your neck, and starved you. And he has piled you with drastics by day and by night. Why, the moment I heard of

that Perliton booby getting you in his clutches—but thank God I was in time! It is almost enough to make one believe in special Providences."

"Hush, Jemmy, hush! You cannot want to vex me now."

"Neither now, nor ever, sir, as you are well aware. So you must do likewise, and not vex me. I have trouble enough of my own, without rebellion by my patients."

"I forgot that, Jemmy. It was not kind of me; but I am not quite clear in my head just now. I fear I am neglecting some great duty. But just for the moment I am not sure what it is. In a minute or two I shall remember what it is."

"No, you won't, my good friend, not for twenty hours yet," the young doctor whispered to himself. "You have had a narrow shave, and another day of Jackson would have sent you to the world you think too much of. There never was a man who dwelt in shadows,—or in glory, as you take it—with his whole great heart as you do. Well, I wish there were more of them, and that I could just be one."

The peace that had settled on the parson's face was such as no lineaments of man can win, without the large labours of a pure life past and the surety of recompense full in view. Fox kept his eye on him, and found

his pulse improve, as hovering slumber deepened into tranquil sleep. "Rare stuff that!" he said, referring not to faith, but to a little phial-bottle he had placed upon the drawers. "He sha'n't go to glory yet, however fit he may be. It is high time, I take it, for me to have a little peck."

The young man was right. He had ridden thirty miles from his father's house that afternoon, and hearing at the Old Barn, as he called his present home, of poor Mr. Penniloe's serious illness, had mounted his weary mare again, and spurred her back to the rectory. Of the story with which all the parish was ringing he had not heard a word as yet, being called away by his anxious mother on the very night after the Squire was buried. But one thing had puzzled him, as he passed and repassed the quiet streets of *Perlycross*,—the people looked at him as if he were a stranger, and whispered to one another as he trotted by. Could they have known what had happened to his father?

With the brown tops still upon his sturdy legs, and spurs thickly clotted with Somerset mud (crustier even than that of Devon) Fox left the bedroom with the door ajar, and found little Fay in a beehive chair, kneeling with her palms put together on the back, and striving hard to pray, but disabled by deep sobs. Her lovely little cheeks and thick bright curls were dabbled into one another by the flood of tears, as a moss-rose, after a thundershower, has its petals tangled in the broiery of its sheath. "Will he die, because I am so wicked? Will he die, because I cannot see the face of God?" she was whispering, with streaming eyes intent upon the sky-light, as if she were looking for a healthy Father there.

"No, my little darling, he will not die at all. Not for many years, I mean, when Fay is a great tall woman."

The child turned round with a flash

of sudden joy, and leaped into his arms, and flung her hair upon his shoulders, and kissed him vehemently.

With a one, two, three!

If you want any more, you must kiss me,

like a true tiny queen of the nursery. Many little girls were very fond of Dr. Fox, although their pretty loves might end in a sombre potion.

"Now shall I tell you what to do, my dear?" said the truly starving doctor, with a smell of fine chops coming up the stairs, sweeter than even riper lips. "You want to help your dear daddy, don't you?"

Little Fay nodded, for her heart was full again, and the heel-tap of a sob would have been behind her words.

"Then go in very quietly, and sit upon that chair, and don't make any noise, even with your hair. Keep the door as it is, or a little wider; and never take your eyes from your dear father's face. If he keeps on sleeping, you stay quiet as a mouse; if he opens his eyes, slip out softly, and tell me. Now you understand all that, but you must not say a word."

The child was gazing at him, with her whole soul in her eyes, and her red lips working up and down across her teeth, as if her father's life hung upon her self-control. Dr. Fox was hard put to it to look the proper gravity. As if he would have put this little thing in charge if there had been any real charge in it! "Grand is the faith of childhood. What a pity it gets rubbed out so soon!" he said to himself as he went down the stairs, and the child crept into her father's room, as if the whole world hung upon her pretty little head.

Mrs. Muggridge had lighted two new candles, of a size considered gigantic then (for eight of them weighed a pound almost), and not only that, but also of materials scarcely yet accepted as orthodox. For "*Composites*" was their name,

and their nature was neither sound tallow nor steadfast wax. Grocer Wood had sent them upon trial gratis; but he was a Dissenter, though a godly man; and the housekeeper, being a convert to the Church, was not at all sure that they would not blow up. Therefore she lit them first for Dr. Fox, as a hardy young man, with some knowledge of mixtures.

"He is going on famously, as well as can be, Muggridge," the doctor replied to her anxious glance. "He will not wake till twelve, or one o'clock, to-morrow; and then I shall be here if possible. The great point then will be to feed him well. Beef-tea, and arrowroot, every two hours, with a little port wine in the arrowroot. No port wine in the house? Then I will send some, that came from my father's own cellar. Steal all his clothes, and keep a female in the room. The parson is a modest man, and that will keep him down. But here comes my mutton-chop. Well done, Susanna! What a cook! What skill and science, at the early age of ten!

This was one of Dr. Jemmy's little jokes; for he knew that Susanna was at least seventeen, and had not a vestige of cookery. But a doctor, like a sexton, must be jolly, and leave the gravity to the middleman—the parson. But instead of cutting in with her usual protest, and claim to the triumph, whatever it might be, Mrs. Muggridge to his surprise held back, and considered his countenance from the neighbourhood of the door. She had always been ready with her tit-for-tat, or lifting of her hand in soft remonstrance at his youthful levity. But now the good woman, from behind the candles, seemed to want snuffing, as they began to do.

"Anything gone wrong in Perlycross since I went away, Mrs. Muggridge? I don't mean the great loss the parish has sustained, or this bad attack of Mr. Penniloe's. That will be over in a few days' time, now

his proper adviser is come back again. By the way, if you let Jackson come in at this front door,—no, it mustn't lie with you, I will write a little note polite but firm, as the papers say; it shall go to his house by my boy Jack, to save professional amenities; but if he comes before he gets it, meet him at the door with another, which I will leave with you. But what makes you look so glum at me, my good woman? Out with it, if I have hurt your feelings. You may be sure that I never meant to do so."

"Oh, sir, is it possible that you don't know what has happened?" Thyatira came forward, with her apron to her eyes. She was very kind hearted, and liked this young man; but she knew how young men may be carried away, especially when puffed up with worldly wisdom.

"I have not the least idea what you mean, Mrs. Muggridge," Fox spoke rather sternly, for his nature was strong and combative enough upon occasion, though his temper was sweet and playful; and he knew that many lies had been spread abroad about him, chiefly by members of his own profession. "My ears are pretty sharp, as suits my name, and I heard you muttering once or twice,—'He can't have done it. I won't believe it of him.' Now if you please, what is it I am charged with doing?"

"Oh, sir, you frighten me when you look like that. I could never have believed that you had such eyes."

"Never mind my eyes. Look here, my good woman. Would you like to have wicked lies told about you? I have been away for three days, called suddenly from home before daylight on Saturday morning. My father was seized with a sudden attack, for the first time in his life. He is getting old; and I suppose a son's duty was to go. Very well, I leave him on Tuesday morning, because I have urgent cases here, and he can do without me. I pass up the village, and everybody looks as if I had cut his throat. I go

home, concluding that I must be mazed, as you people call it, from want of food and sleep. But when I get home, my own man, and boy, and old Betty, all rush out, and stare at me. 'Are you mad?' I call out, and instead of answering, they tell me the parson is dying, and at the mercy of Jervis Jackson. I know what that means, and without quitting saddle come back here and rout the evil one. Then what happens? Why, my very first mouthful is poisoned by the black looks of a thoroughly good woman. Tell me what it is, or by George and the Dragon, I'll ride home, and drag it out of my own people!"

"Can you prove you were away, sir? Can you show when you left home?" Thyatira began to draw nearer, and forgot to keep a full-sized chair 'twixt the doctor and herself.

"To be sure, I can prove that I have been at Foxden by at least a score of witnesses, if needful."

"Thank the Lord in heaven that He hath not quite forgotten us! Susanna, have another plate hot, but be sure you don't meddle with the gridiron. Bad enough for Perlycross it must be anyhow; a disgrace the old parish can never get over—but ever so much better than if you, our own doctor——"

"Good-bye, Mrs. Muggridge! You'll see me to-morrow."

"Oh no, sir, no. I will tell you now just. How could I begin, when I thought you had done it? At least I never thought that, I am sure. But how was I to contradict it? And the rudest thing ever done outside of London! The poor Squire's grave hath been robbed by somebody, and all Perlycross is mad about it."

"What!" cried Jemmy Fox. "Do you mean Sir Thomas Waldron? It cannot be. No one would dare to do such a thing."

"But some one hath, sir, sure enough. Mr. Jakes it was, sir, as first found it out, and a more truthfuller man never lived in any parish.

My master doth not know a word of it yet. Thank the Lord almost for this chill upon his lungs; for the blow might have killed him, if he had been there, with such a disorderly thing to see to. We must hide it from him as long as ever we can. To tell the truth, I was frightened to let you go up to him, with every one so positive about the one who did it. But you wouldn't take denial, and I am very glad you wouldn't. But do have t'other chop, sir; it's a better one than this was. Oh, I beg your pardon, I forgot to draw the blind down."

The truth was that she had been afraid till now to sever herself from the outer world, and had kept Susanna on the kitchen stairs; but now she felt as certain of the young man's innocence as she had been of his guilt before.

"Nothing more, thank you," said Fox, sitting back, and clenching his hand upon the long bread-knife. "And so all the parish, and even you, were only too delighted to believe that I, who have worked among you nearly three years now, chiefly for the good of the poor and helpless, and never taken sixpence when it was hard to spare,—that I would rob the grave of a man whom I revered and loved as if he were my father. This is what you call Christianity, is it? And no one can be saved except such Christians as yourselves! The only Christian in the parish is your parson. Excuse me,—I have no right to be angry with,—with a woman, for any want of charity. Come, tell me this precious tale, and I'll forgive you. No doubt the evidence is very strong against me."

Thyatira was not pleased with this way of taking it. She thought that the charity was on her side, for accepting the doctor's own tale so frankly. So she fell back upon her main buttress. "If you please, Dr. Fox," she said with some precision, "as women be lacking in charity, therefore the

foremost of all godly graces, you might think it fairer to see Sergeant Jakes, a military man and upright. And being the first as he was to discover, I reckon he hath the first right to speak out. Susanna seeth light in the schoolroom still, though all the boys be gone, and books into the cupboards. Ah! he is the true branch for discipline. Do'e good to look in at the window after dusk, and the candles as straight as if the French was coming. 'I am the Vine,' saith the Lord, 'and ye'— but you know what it is, Dr. Jemmy, though seldom to be found, whether church it be or chapel. Only if you make a point of seeing the man that knoweth more than all of us put together, the new pupil, Master Peck-over, is a very obliging young gentleman, and one as finds it hard upon him to keep still."

"Oh, he is come, is he? I have heard some tales of him. It struck me there was more noise than usual in the pupils' room. Let me think a moment, if you please. Yes, I had better see Sergeant Jakes. He may be a queer old codger, but he will stick to what he sees and says. Tell those noisy fellows that they must keep quiet. They want High Jarks among them with his biggest vine, as you seem to call his cane."

CHAPTER XI.

AT THE CHARGE.

STRENUOUS vitality, strong pulse, thick skin, tough bone, and steadfast brain, all elements of force and fortitude, were united in this Doctor Fox; and being thus endowed, and with ready money too, he felt more of anger than of fear when a quarrel was thrust upon him. While he waited alone for the schoolmaster, he struck Mr. Penniloe's best dining-table with a heavy fist that made the dishes ring, and the new-fashioned candles throw spots of grease upon the coarse white diaper. Then he laughed at

himself, and put a calm face on, as he heard the strong steps in the passage.

"Sit here, Mr. Jakes," he said, pointing to a chair, as the sergeant offered him a stiff salute. "Mrs. Muggridge, you had better leave the room. This is not a nice matter for ladies. Now, sergeant, what is all this rotten stuff about me?"

"Not about you, sir, I hope with all my heart."

Mr. Jakes met the young man's flashing eyes, with a gaze that replied, "You don't scare me," and drew his chair close enough to study every feature. If the young man was full of wrath, so was the old man— implacable wrath, at the outrage to his Colonel.

"Well, tell your pack of lies,"— Fox was driven beyond himself by the other's suspicious scrutiny. "Oh, I beg your pardon, you believe them true, of course. But out with your stuff, like a man, sir!"

"It is your place to prove it a pack of lies," said the old man, with his shaggy eyebrows rigid as a line of British bayonets; "and if you can't, by the God who made me, I'll run my old sword through your heart."

"Rather hard upon me. Not got it here, I hope. Half an hour for repentance, while you fetch it out of some cheese-toasting rack. A nice man to teach the youth of Perlycross! What a fool you are, Jakes! But that you can't help. Even a fool though may try to be fair. During your long time in the wars, were you ever accused wrongfully, my friend?"

"Yes, sir, a score of times. And I like your spirit. If you did what they say of you, you would be a cur. Every evil name you call me makes me think the better of you."

"I will call you no more, for I want no favour. All I want is truth about this cursed outrage. Am I to wait all night for it? Now just tell your tale, as if you were sitting at the Ivy-bush. You have been in

command of men, no doubt; just command yourself."

"That I will," said the veteran with an upward glance; "not like the Ivy-bush, but as before the Lord. Sir, I will command myself, as you recommend; and perhaps you would be none the worse for taking your own medicine."

"Jakes, you are right. It is enough to turn me savage. But you shall not hear me speak again until you have finished."

"It was just like this, sir," began the sergeant, looking round for a glass by force of habit, and then ashamed of himself for such a thought just now; "everybody in this parish knows how much I thought of Colonel Waldron, for a better and a braver man never trod this earth. Even Parson Penniloe will have to stand behind him when the last muster cometh, because he hath not served his country. But I never was satisfied with any of you doctors. You may be very well in your way, Mr. Fox, for toothing or measles, or any young complaint; but where is your experience in times of peace? And as for that hang-dog looking chap from London,—well, I won't say what I thought of him, for I always keep my own opinions to myself. But I knew it was all over with our poor Colonel the moment I clapped eyes on that fellow. Why, I went myself at once, and begged the Colonel to have him drummed out of the parish to the rogue's tattoo. But the good Colonel only laughed, and shook my hand—the last time it was, sir, the very last time."

"You were at the funeral, and there never was a truer one. I was proud to my heart, though it felt like lead, to see three old officers come from miles away, brave men as ever led a storming column, with tears in their eyes, and not a thought of their own ends. There was no firing-party as should have been, being nothing but peace going on nowadays, and

only country bumpkins about here. But I see you are impatient, because you know all that.

"As soon as all were gone away and the ground put tidy, I brought a few of my own white flowers, as they do in Spanish land, and put them in very carefully with a bit of moss below them, and fastened them so as not to blow away, although there was a strong east wind up. Later on at night I came again by the little wicket from the schoolroom, just to see that all was right, for my mind was uneasy somehow.

"The moon was going low, and it was getting very cold, and not a soul about that I could see. The flowers showed bright at the head of the mound, and close by was a little guardian,—the Colonel's pet dog, that could never bear to leave him—she was lying there all in the cold by herself, sobbing every now and then, or as it were bewailing, with her chin along the ground, as if her heart was broken. It struck me so sad, that I could look at her no more.

"In the morning I slept past the usual time, being up so late and out of spirits. But I saw the white frost on the ground, and I had a few boys to correct before school began, and then lessons to see to till twelve o'clock; and it must have been turned the half hour when I went to churchyard again to see how my flowers had stood the frost. I had brought a bit of victuals in my pocket for the dog; but little Jess was gone; and I could not blame her, considering how easily a man forgets his dog; and yet I was vexed with her, for being so like us; for the poor things have no religion, such as we make smooth with. My flowers were there, but not exactly as I thought I had put them; and the bank appeared to me to be made up sharper.

"Well, Mr. Fox, I am not one of them that notice little things upon the earth so much (as if there was never any sky above them), and make more

fuss about a blade of grass than the nature of men and good metal. I thought that old Channing had been at work again, not satisfied with his understrapper's job. Then I drew forth my flowers; and they looked almost as if they had been tossed about the yard, crumpled almost anyhow, as well as scorched with frost.

"At this I was angry, when I thought how kind the poor Colonel had been to that old stick of a clerk, and even let him muck up their liveries; and so I set off for the old man's cottage, to have a word or two with him about it. But he was not at home; and little Polly, his granddaughter, was sure that he had not been near the church that day, but was gone to help to dig Farmer John's potatoes.

"Then back I went again in a terrible quandary, remembering the wicked doings up the country, and the things that had come across my fancy in the night.

"The first thing I saw, when I came back by south-gate, was a young man, red in the face and out of breath, jumping in and out over graves and tombstones, from the west end where the contractor's work is. 'What are you doing, Bob?' said I, rebuking of him pretty strongly; for I saw that it was one of my old boys, now become a trusty sort of groom at Walderscourt.

"Sergeant, what have you been doing here?' says he. 'Our little Jess has just come home with one leg cut in two.'

"All my blood seemed to stand still, and I should have dropped, if I hadn't laid hold of that very tombstone which the parson can't endure. The whole of it flashed upon me in a moment; and a fool I must have been not to see it all before. But wicked as our men were, and wicked as I myself was (as I will not deny it, in the rough-and-tumble times) such a blackguard, dastard crime was

out of my conception. Considering who the Colonel was; considering what he was, sir!"

The sergeant turned away his face, and desired to snuff the candles. No snuffers were there, for this new invention was warranted not to want them. So he fumbled with his empty sleeve, but it would not come up to order; and then he turned back, as if brought to bay, and reckless of public opinion, with his best new handkerchief in his hand,—a piece of cotton goods imprinted with the Union Jack in colours.

"My friend, you are a noble fellow," said Fox, with his own wrongs out of date in the movement of large feeling. "Would to God that I had any one as true to me as you are!"

"It is not that," resumed the sergeant, trying to look stern again. "It is the cursed cruelty that makes me hate mankind, sir. That a man should kill a poor dumb thing, because it loved its master—there, there, the Almighty will smite the brute; for all helpless things belong to Him.

"Well, sir, I hardly know what happened next, or what I said to Bob Cornish. But he went round the wall to fetch his horse; and the news must have spread like wildfire. A young man, who had helped to make up the grave, was going to his dinner through the churchyard; and seeing us there, he came and looked, and turned like a ghost, and followed us. Presently we were in the street, with half the village after us, going to the chief churchwarden's house, for we knew how ill the parson was. At the cross-roads we met Farmer John, and old Clerk Channing along of him, looking doiled as bad as we were, and between them the blacksmith from Susscotford, and a terrible tale we had from them.

"Farmer John, as the head of the parish now, took the lead; and well he did it. We went back by the big iron gate, and there we kept the outsiders back; and Mr. Adney was as

good with his, who were working near the tower. I was ordered to the eastern end, where the stone stile leads into Perlycombe lane, by which the villains must have got in; with no house there in view of it, but only the tumble-down abbey. Somebody was sent for my old sword, that I knocked away from the French officer, and now hangeth over the Commandments; and I swore that I would slash off any hand that was laid on the edge of the riser; while Adney brought a pile of scaffold-cords, and enclosed all the likelihood of foot-prints.

"By this time the other church-warden was come, and they all put their heads together, and asked what my opinion was; and I said—'Make no bones of it.' But they had done a wiser thing than that, with an eye to the law and the penalties. They had sent Bob Cornish, on the fast young horse the Colonel thought so much of, to fetch the nearest Justice of the Peace from his house this side of Perlton. Squire Mockham came, as strong as he could ride, with his mind made up about it; and four digging men were set to work at once. Squire Mockham was as sharp about it as if he had just had the lid taken off of him by death of superior officer; and I, who had seen him on the Bench knock under to half a wink from the Colonel's eye, was vexed with the dignity he took over by reason of being survivor.

"Clerk Channing will tell you more about the condition of things underground, for I never made them my study; though I have helped to bury a many brave men in the rough, both French and English. My business it was to keep people away; and while I was putting a stern face on, and looking fit to kill any of the bumpkins, the Lord knows I could never have touched them, for my blood was as cold as snow-water. And when they sang up, 'No Colonel here!' just as if it made no difference, I dropped the

French sword, and my flesh clave to my bones, the same as it did to King David. And ever since that I have been fit for Bedlam; and the boys may stand and make mouths at me."

"I can understand that," said Dr. Fox, with his medical instincts moving generously, as they always do with a man worthy of that high calling. "Jakes, you are in a depressed condition; and this exertion has made it worse. What you want is a course of carminatives. I will send you a bottle this very night. No more excitement for you at present. Lay aside all thought of this sad matter."

"As if I could, sir; as if I could!"

"No, I am a fool for suggesting that. But think of it as little as you can. Above all things, go in for more physical exertion. Cane half a dozen boys before breakfast."

"There's a dozen and a half, sir, that have been neglected sadly."

"That will be a noble tonic. Making mouths at Sergeant Jakes! You look better already, at the thought of doing duty and restoring discipline."

"Talk about duty, sir! Where was I? Oh, if I had only gone out again; if I had only gone out again, instead of turning into my bed like a sluggard! I shall never forgive myself for that."

"You would just have been killed, as poor Jess was. Such scoundrels think nothing of adding murder to a crime still worse. But before you go home,—which is the best thing you can do, and have a dish of hot kidneys from your brother's shop—one thing I must ask, and you must answer. What lunatic has dared to say that I had anything to do with this?"

"The whole parish is lunatic, if it comes to that, sir."

"And all the world, sometimes. But who began it? Jakes, you are a just man, or you could not be so loyal. Is it fair to keep me in the dark about the black things they are saying of me?"

"Sir, it is not. And I will tell you all I know, whatever enemies I may

make. When a thing flares about you can seldom lay your hand on the man, or the woman, who fired the train. It was Crang, the shoeing smith at Susscotford, who first brought your name into it."

"Crang is an honest and a simple-minded man. He would never speak against me of his own will. He has been most grateful for what I did when his little girl had scarlet fever. How could he have started this cursed tale?"

"From the evidence of his own eyes, sir; according at least to his use of them."

"Tell me what he saw, or thought he saw. He is not the man to tell a lie. Whatever he said he believed in." Fox spoke without any anger now, for this could be no scheme of his enemies.

"You are wonderful fair, sir," said Sergeant Jakes. "You deserve to have all above board; and you shall have it."

Tired as he was, and beginning to feel poorly at the threat of medicine, the old soldier told the blacksmith's tale with as few variations as can contrive to keep themselves out of a repetition. Fox began to see that the case was not by any means so easy as he first supposed. Here was evidence direct against him from an impartial witness; a tale coherent and confirmed by facts independent of it, a motive easily assigned, and the public eager to accept it after recent horrors. But he was young, and warm of faith in friendship, candour, and good-will; or (if the worst should come to the worst) in absolute pure justice.

"It will not take long to put this to rights," he said, when the sergeant had finished his account. "No one can really have believed it, except that blockhead of a blacksmith. He was in a blue funk all the time, and no need to be ashamed of it. There are two people I must see to-night,—Mr. Mockham, and that Joe Crang

himself. I shall borrow a horse from Walter Haddon; my young mare has had enough of it. I shall see how the parson looks before I go. Now go to bed, Sergeant, as I told you. To-morrow you will find all the wise-acres saying what fools they have made of one another."

But the veteran shook his head, and said, "If a cat has nine lives, sir, a lie has ninety-nine."

CHAPTER XII.

A FOOL'S ERRAND.

MR. JOHN MOCKHAM was a short stout man, about five or six and forty years of age, ruddy, kind-hearted, and jocular. He thought very highly of Jemmy Fox, both as a man and a doctor; moreover he had been a guest at Foxden several times, and had met with the greatest hospitality. But for all that, he doubted not a little in his heart (though his tongue was not allowed to know it) concerning the young doctor's innocence of this most atrocious outrage. He bore in mind how the good and gentle mother had bemoaned (while Jemmy was in turn-down collars) the very sad perversity of his mind towards anything bony and splintery. Nothing could keep him from cutting up, even when his thumb was done round with oozing rag, anything jointed or cellular; and the smell of the bones he collected was dreadful, even in the drawer where his frilled shirts were laid. The time was not come yet, and happily shall never, in spite of all morbid suisection, when a man shall anatomise his own mind, and trace every film of its histology. Squire Mockham would have laughed any one to scorn who had dared to suggest that, in the process of his brain, there was any connection of the frills in Jemmy's drawer with the blacksmith's description of what he had seen; and yet without his knowledge, it may even have been so. But whatever his opinion on the subject was,

he did not refuse to see this young friend; although he was entertaining guests, and the evening was now far advanced.

Fox was shown into the library by a very pale footman, who glanced at the visitor as if he feared instant dissection, and evidently longed to lock him in. "Is it come to this already?" thought poor Fox.

"Excuse me for not asking you to join us in there," Mr. Mockham began rather stiffly, as he pointed to the dining-room; "but I thought you might wish to see me privately."

"I care not how it is. I have come to you as a magistrate, and—and—" "an old friend of the family," was what he meant to say, but substituted—"as a gentleman, and a sensible and clear-sighted one, to receive my deposition on oath, concerning the wicked lies spread abroad about me."

"Of what use will it be? The proper course is for you to wait, till the other side move in the matter; then prove your innocence if possible; and then proceed against them."

"That is to say, I am to lie for six months, perhaps twelve months, under this horrible imputation, and be grateful for escaping at last from it! I see that even you are half inclined to think me guilty."

"All this to a magistrate is quite improper. It happens that I have resolved not to act, to take no share in any proceedings that may follow, on account of my acquaintance with your family. But that you could not know, until I told you. I am truly sorry for you; but you must even bear it."

"You say that so calmly, because you think I deserve it. Now as you are not going to act in the matter, and have referred to your friendship with my family, I will tell you a little thing in confidence, which will prove to you at once that I am innocent, that I never could by any possibility have done it."

Before Mr. Mockham could draw back, the visitor had whispered a few words in his ear, which entirely changed the whole expression of his face. "Well, I am surprised! I had no idea of it. How could that fool Crang have made such a mistake? But I saw from the first how absurd it was to listen to such fellows. I refused to give a warrant. I said that no connection could be shown between the two occurrences. How strange that I should have hit the mark so well! But I seem to have that luck generally. Well, I am pleased, for your dear mother's sake, as well as your own, Master Jemmy. There may be a lot of trouble, but you must keep your heart up, and the winning card is yours. After all, what a thing it is to be a doctor!"

"Not so very fine, unless your nature drives you into it. And everybody thinks you make the worst of him to exalt your blessed self. So they came for a warrant against me, did they? Is it lawful to ask who they were?"

"To be sure it is, my boy. Everybody has a right to that piece of information. Tapscott was the man that came to swear—strong reason for believing, &c., with two or three witnesses, all from your parish; Crang among the others, hauled in by the neck, and each foremost in his own opinion. But Crang wanted to be last, for he kept on shouting that, if he had to swear against Doctor Jemmy, the Lord would know that he never meant it. This of course made it all the worse for your case; and every one was grieved, yet gratified. You are too young to know the noise which the newspapers begin to call 'public opinion,'—worth about as much as a blue-bottle's buzz, and as eager to pitch upon nastiness. I refused a warrant, as my duty was. Even if the blacksmith's tale was true (and there was no doubt that he believed it), what legal connection could they show betwixt that and the

matter at the churchyard? In a case of urgency, and risk of disappearance of the suspected person, I might have felt bound to grant it. But I knew that you would stand it out; and unless they could show any others implicated, their application was premature."

"Then, unless you had ventured to stem the tide, I suppose that I should have been arrested when I came back to-day from my father's sick-bed. A pretty state of law in this free country!"

"The law is not to blame. It must act promptly, in cases of strong suspicion. Probably they will apply to-morrow to some younger magistrate. But your father is ill! How long have you been with him? They made a great deal out of your disappearance."

"My father has had a paralytic stroke. I trust that he will get over it, and I have left him in excellent hands. But to hear of this would kill him. His mind is much weakened, of course, and he loves me. I had no idea that he cared much for me; I thought he only cared for my sister."

"Excuse me for a moment. I must go to my guests." Mr. Mockham perceived that the young man was overcome for the moment, and would rather be alone. "I will make it all right with them, and be back directly."

Fox was an active and resolute young fellow, with great powers of endurance, as behoved a man of medicine. Honest indignation and strong sense of injustice had stirred up his energy for some hours; but since last Thursday night he had slept very little, and the whole waking time had been worry and exertion. So that now when he was left alone, and had no foe to fire at, bodily weariness began to tell upon him, and he fell back in an easy chair into a peaceful slumber.

When the guests had all departed, and the magistrate came back, he stopped short for a moment, with a broad smile on his face, and felt proud

of his own discretion in refusing to launch any criminal process against this trustful visitor. For the culprit of the outcry looked so placid, gentle, good-natured, and forgiving with the natural expression restored by deep oblivion, that a woman would have longed to kiss his forehead, if she had known of his terrible mishap.

"I have brought you a little drop of cordial, Master Jemmy. I am sure you must want something good to keep you up." Mr. Mockham put a spirit-stand and glass upon the table, as Fox arose, and shook himself.

"That is very kind of you. But I never take spirits, though I prescribe them sometimes for old folks when much depressed. But a glass of your old port wine, sir, would help me very much,—if I am not giving you a lot of trouble."

"You shall have a glass, almost as good as your father has given me. There it is. How sorry I am to hear about his illness! But I will do what he would have wished. I will talk to you as a friend, and one who knows the world better than you can. First, however, you must forgive me for my vile suspicions. They were founded partly on your good mother's account of your early doings. And I have known certain instances of the zeal of your profession, how in the name of science and the benefits to humanity—but I won't go on about that just now. The question is, how shall we clear you to the world! The fact that I doubted you is enough to show what others are likely to conclude. Unluckily the story has had three days' start, and has fallen upon fruitful ground. Your brother doctors about here are doing their best to clench the nail" (Mr. Mockham, like almost everybody else, was apt to mix metaphors in talking) "by making lame excuses for you, instead of attempting to deny it."

"Such fellows as Jervis Jackson, I suppose. Several of them hate me, because I am not a humbug. Perhaps

they will get up a testimonial to me, for fear there should be any doubt of my guilt."

"That is the very thing they talk of doing. How well you understand them, my young friend! Now, what have you to show against this general conclusion? For of course you cannot mention what you confessed to me."

"I can just do this,—I can prove an *alibi*. You forget that I can show where I have been, and prove the receipt of the letter which compelled me to leave home. Surely that will convince everybody who has a fair mind. And for the rest, what do I care?"

"I don't see exactly what to say to that," Mr. Mockham was beginning to feel tired also, after going through all his best stories to his guests. "But what says Cicero, or some other fellow that old Dr. Richards use to drive into my skin? 'To neglect what every one thinks of one's self is the proof not only of an arrogant, but even of a dissolute man.' You are neither of these. You must contend with it, and confound your foes; or else run away. And upon the whole, as you don't belong here, but up the country (as we call it), and your father wants your attention, the wisest thing you can do is to bolt."

"Would you do that, if it were your own case?" Fox had not much knowledge of Squire Mockham, except as a visitor at his father's house; and whether he should respect or despise him, depended upon the answer.

"I would see them all d—d first;" the magistrate replied, looking as if he would be glad to do it; "but that is because I am a Devonshire man. You are over the border, and not to be blamed."

"Well, there are some things one cannot get over," Dr. Jemmy answered, with a pleasant smile; "and the worst of them all is to be born outside of Devon. If I had been of true Devonshire birth, I believe you would never have held me guilty."

"Others may take that view, but I do not," said the magistrate very magnanimously. "It would have been better for you, no doubt. But we are not narrow-minded. And your mother was a Devonshire woman, connected with our oldest families. No, no, the question is now of evidence; and the law does not recognise the difference. The point is, to prove that you were really away."

"Outside the holy county where this outrage was committed? Foxden is thirty miles from Percycross, even by the shortest cuts, and nearer thirty-five to all who are particular about good roads. I was at my father's bedside some minutes before ten o'clock on Saturday morning."

"That is not enough to show. We all know in common sense that the ride would have taken at least four hours; probably more, over those bad roads in the darkness of a November morning. The simplest thing will be for you to tell me the whole of your movements on the night of this affair."

"That I will, as nearly as I can remember; though I had no reason then for keeping any special record. To begin with—I was at the funeral of course, and saw you there, but did not cross over to speak to you. Then I walked home to the Old Barn where I live, which stands as you know at the foot of Hagdon Hill. It was nearly dark then, perhaps half-past five; and I felt out of spirits, and sadly cut up, for I was very fond of Sir Thomas. I sat thinking of him for an hour or so; and then I changed my clothes for riding togs, and had a morsel of cold beef and a pipe, and went to look for the boy that brings my letters; for old Walker, the postman, never comes near the Barn. There was no sign of the boy, so I saddled Old Rock (for my man was 'keeping funeral' still, as they express it) and I rode to North-end, the furthest corner of the parish, to see to a little girl who has had a dangerous attack of croup. Then I

crossed Maiden Down by the gravel pits, to see an old stager at Old Bait, who abuses me every time and expects a shilling. Then homewards through Priestwell, and knocked at Gronow's door, having a general permission to come in at night. But he was not at home, or did not want to be disturbed, so I lost very little time by that. It must have been now at least nine o'clock, with the moon in the southwest, and getting very cold; but I had managed to leave my watch on the drawers when I pulled my mourning clothes off.

"From Priestwell I came back to Perylcross, and was going straight home to see about my letters, for I knew that my father had been slightly out of sorts, when I saw a man waiting at the cross-roads for me, to say that I was wanted at the Whetstone Pits, where a man had tumbled down a hole, and broken both his legs. Without asking the name, I put spurs to Old Rock, and set off at a spanking pace for the Whetstone Pits, expecting to find the foreman there to show me where it was. It is a long roundabout way from our village, at least for any one on horseback, though not more than three miles perhaps in a straight line, because you have to go all round the butt of Hagdon Hill which no one would think of riding over in the dark. I should say it must be five miles at least from our cross-roads."

"Every yard of that distance," said the magistrate, who was following the doctor's tale intently, and making notes in his pocket-book; "five miles at least, and road out of repair. Your parish ought to be indicted."

"Very well. Old Rock was getting rather tired. A better horse never looked through a bridle, but he can't be less than sixteen years of age. My father had him eight years, and I have had him three; and even for a man with both legs broken I could not drive a willing horse to death. However, we let no grass grow beneath our feet; and dark as the

lanes were, and wonderfully rough even for this favoured county, I got to the pit at the corner of the hill as soon as a man could get there without breaking his neck."

"In that case he never would get there at all."

"Perhaps not; or at least, not in working condition. Well, you know what a queer sort of place it is. I had been there before, about a year ago; but then it was daylight, and that makes all the difference. I am not so very fidgety where I go, when I know that a man is in agony; but how to get along there in the dark, with the white grit up to my horse's knees, and black pines barring out the moonshine, was (I don't mind confessing it) a thing beyond me. And the strangest thing of all was, that nobody came near me. I had the whole place to myself, so far as I could see, and I did not want it.

"I sat on Old Rock; and I had to sit close, for the old beauty's spirit was up, in spite of all his weariness. His hunting days came to his memory perhaps, and you should have seen how he jumped about; at the risk of his dear old bones of course, but a horse is much pluckier than we are. What got into his old head, who shall say? But I failed to see the fun of it, as he did. There was all the white stuff that comes out of the pits, like a great cascade of diamonds glittering in the level moonlight, with broad bars of black thrown across it by the pines, all trembling and sparkling and seeming to move.

"Those things tell upon a man somehow, and he seems to have no right to disturb them. But I felt that I was not brought here for nothing, and began to get vexed at seeing nobody. So I set up a shout, with a hand to my mouth, and then a shrill whistle between my nails. The echo came back very punctually; but nothing else, except a little gliding of the shale and shivering of black branches. Then I jumped off my

horse, and made him fast to a tree, and scrambled along the rough bottom of the hill.

"There are eight pits on the south side, and seven upon the north, besides the three big ones at the west end of the hill which are pretty well worked out according to report. Their mouths are pretty nearly at a level, about a hundred and fifty feet below the chine of hill. But the tumble-down,—I forget what the proper name is—the excavated waste, that comes down, like a great beard, to the foot where the pine trees stop it——"

"*Brekkes* is their name for it," interrupted Mr. Mockham; "*brekkles*, or *brockles*, I am not sure which. You know they are a colony of Cornishmen."

"Yes, and a strange outlandish lot, having nothing to do with the people around whenever they can help it. It is useless for any man to seek work there. They push him down the brekkles if that is what they call them. However, they did not push me down, although I made my way up to the top, when I had shouted in vain along the bottom. I could not get up the stuff itself; I knew better than to make the trial. But I circumvented them at the further end; and there I found a sort of terrace, where a cart could get along from one pit-mouth to another. And from mouth to mouth I passed along this rough and stony gallery, under the furzy crest of hill, without discovering a sign of life, while the low moon across the broad western plains seemed to look up rather than down at me. Into every black pit-mouth, broad or narrow, bratticed with timber or arched with flint, I sent a loud shout, but the only reply was like the dead murmuring of a shell. And yet all the time, I felt somehow as if I were watched by invisible eyes, as a man upon a cliff is observed from the sea.

"This increased my anger, which was rising at the thought that some one had made a great fool of me; and

forgetting all the ludicrous side of the thing (as a man out of temper is apt to do) I mounted the most conspicuous pile at the end of the hill, and threw up my arms, and shouted to the moon, 'Is this the way to treat a doctor?' The distant echoes answered—'Doctor! doctor!' as if they were conferring a degree upon me; and that made me laugh and grow rational again, and resolve to have one more try, instead of giving in. So I climbed upon a ridge, where I could see along the chine through patches of white among the blackness of the furze; and in the distance there seemed to be a low fire smouldering. For a moment I doubted about going on, for I have heard that these people are uncommonly fierce with any one they take for a spy upon them; and here I was entirely at their mercy. But whenever I have done a cowardly thing, I have always been miserable afterwards; and so I went cautiously forward towards the fire, with a sharp look-out and my hunting-crop ready. Suddenly a man rose in front of me, almost as if he jumped out of the ground, a wild-looking fellow, stretching out both arms. I thought I was in for a nasty sort of fight, and he seemed a very ugly customer. But he only stepped back, and made some inquiry, so far as I could gather from his tone, for his words were beyond my intelligence.

"Then I told him who I was, and what had brought me there; and he touched his rough hat and seemed astonished. He had not the least difficulty in making out my meaning, but I could not return the compliment. 'Naw hoort along o' yussen,' was his nearest approach to English; which I took to mean, 'no accident among us;' and I saw by his gestures that he meant this. In spite of some acquaintance with the Mendip miners, and pretty fair mastery of their brogue, this Whetstoner went beyond my linguistic powers, and I was naturally put out with him. Especially when in reply to my conclu-

sion that I had been made a fool of, he answered 'yaw, yaw,' as if the thing was done with the greatest ease and must be familiar to me. But in his rough style he was particularly civil, as if he valued our profession and was sorry that any one should play with it. He seemed to have nothing whatever to conceal; and so far as I could interpret, he was anxious to entertain me as his guest, supposing that time permitted it. But I showed him where my horse was, and he led me to him by a better way, and helped me with him, and declined the good shilling which I offered him. This made me consider him a superior sort of fellow; though to refuse a shilling shows neglected education.

"When I got back to the Ancient Barn (as I call my place, because it is in reality nothing else) it was two o'clock in the morning, and all my authorities were locked in slumber. George was on a truss of hay up in the tallat, making more noise than Perle weir in a flood, although with less melody in it; and old Betty was under her 'Mark, Luke, and John,' as they call the four-poster when one is gone. So I let them bide, as you would say; gave Old Rock a mash myself, because he was coughing; and went in pretty well tired, I can assure you, to get a bit of bread and cheese, and then embrace the downy.

"But there on my table was a letter from my mother, which I ought to have received before I started, but the funeral had even thrown the post out, it appears. I don't believe that my boy was at all to blame. But you know what Walker the postman is, when anything of interest is moving. He simply stands still to see the end of it; sounding his horn every now and again, to show his right to look over other folk's heads. Every one respects him, because he walks so far; thirty miles a day, by his own account; but it must be eighteen, even when he gets no beer."

"A worthy old soul!" said the

magistrate. "And he had a lot of troubles last winter. Nobody likes to complain, on that account. He is welcome to get his peck of nuts upon the road, and to sell them next day at Pumpington, to eke out his miserable wages. But this is an age of progress, and a strict line must be drawn somewhere. The post is important sometimes, as you know, though we pay so many eightpences for nothing. Why, my friends were saying, only this very evening, that Walker must submit henceforth to a rule to keep him out of the coppices. When he once gets there, all his sense of time is gone. And people are now so impatient."

"But the nutting-time is over, and he has not that excuse. He must have been four hours late on Friday, and no doubt he was as happy as ever. But to me it would have made all the difference; for I should have started that evening for Foxden. My mother's letter begged me to come at once; for she feared that my father would never speak again. There had been some little trifles between us; as I don't mind telling you, who are acquainted with the family. No doubt I was to blame; and you may suppose how much I was cut up by this sad news. It was folly to start in that tangle of cross-lanes, with the moon gone down, and my horse worn out. I threw myself down upon my bed and sobbed, as I thought of all the best parts of the governor.

"What a fool a man is, when a big blow falls upon him. For two or three hours I must have lain like that, as if all the world were in league against me, and nothing to be done but feel helpless and rebel. I knew that there was no horse near the place to be hired for the ride to Foxden, even if the owner could be fetched out of his bed. And all the time I was forgetting the young mare that I had bought about a month ago; a sweet little thing, but not thoroughly broken, and I did not mean to use her much

until the spring. She was loose in a straw-run at the top of my home-meadow, with a nice bit of aftermath still pretty fresh, and a feed of corn at night, which I generally took to her myself. Now she came to the gate and whinnied for me, because she had been forgotten; and hearing the sound I went down stairs and lit a lantern to go to the corn-bin. But she had better have gone without her supper, for I said to myself, why not try her? It was a long way for a young thing just off grass; but if only she would take me to the great London road, I might hire one if she became distressed.

"Of course I went gently and carefully at first, for I found her a little raw and bridle-shy; but she carried me beautifully when the daylight came, and would have gone like a bird if I had let her. She will make a rare trotter in my opinion, and I only gave fifteen pounds for her. I would not look at fifty now, after the style she brought me back—a mouth like a French kid-glove, and the kindest of the kind."

"You deserve a good horse, because you treat them well, Jemmy. But what about your good father?"

"Well, sir, thank God, he is in no danger now; but he must be kept very quiet. If he were to hear of this lying tale it might be fatal to him. And even my mother must not know it. Your Exeter paper never goes that way, but the Bristol ones might copy it. My only sister, Christie, is a wonderful girl, very firm, and quick, and sensible. Some say that she has got more sense than I have, though I don't quite see it. I shall write to her to-morrow, just to put her upon guard, with a line for Dr. Freeborn too, my father's old friend and director, who knows exactly how to treat him. What a rage they will be in when they hear of this! But they will keep it as close as a limpet. Now, what do you advise me to do about myself?"

"You must look it in the face, like

a man, of course; though it is enough to sour you for life almost, after all your good works among the poor."

"No fear of that, sir. It is the way of the world. 'Fair before fierce' is my family motto; and I shall try to act up to it. Though I dare say my temper will give out sometimes, especially with brother Pill-box."

"You take it much better than I should, I fear." Mr. Mockham spoke the truth in this. "You know that I will do my utmost for you; and if you keep your head, you will tide over this, and be the idol of all who have abused you—I mean, who have abused you honestly. You seem to have solid stuff inside you, as is natural to your father's son. But it will take a lot out of your life, and it seems very hard upon a fine young fellow, especially after what you have told me. Things will be very black there, as you must see."

"Certainly they will. But I am not a boy. I know a noble nature when I come across it. And if ever there was—but I won't go on with that. If she believes in me, I am content, whatever the low world may say. I have never been romantic."

"I am not at all sure of that, my boy. But I felt that sort of wildness before I was married. Now let me put one or two questions to you; just to get up your case, as if I was your counsel. Did any of your people at the Old Barn see you, after your return from the Whetstone Pits?"

"Not one, to my knowledge. My household is small in that ramshackle place. Old Betty up stairs, and George over the stables, and the boy who goes home to his mother at night. I have only those three in the domestic line, except upon great occasions. Old Betty was snoring in her bed, George doing the like upon a truss of hay, and the boy of course off the premises. They must have found in the morning that I had been there, but without knowing when, or how long I stayed."

"That is most unlucky. Did you pass near the church? Did you meet any people who would know you, anywhere between midnight and morning?"

"Neither man, woman, nor child did I see, from the time I left the Whetstone Hill until I passed Perlycombe next morning. It was either too late, or too early, for our very quiet folk to be stirring."

"Bad again, very bad. You cannot show your whereabouts, during any part of the critical time. I suppose you would know the man on the Whetstone Hill; but that was too early to help you much. The man at the cross-roads, would you know him?"

"Not to be certain. He kept in the shadow, and spoke as if he were short of breath. And the message was so urgent, that I never stopped to examine him."

"Very little comfort anywhere. Is it usual for Dr. Gronow to be from home at night?"

Mr. Mockham put this question abruptly, and pronounced the doctor's name as if he did not love him.

"Not very usual; but I have known it happen. He is wild about fishing,

though he cannot fish a bit; and he sometimes goes late to his night-lines."

"He would scarcely have night-lines laid in November, however big a poacher he may be. Betwixt you and me, Jemmy, in the very strictest confidence, I believe he is at the bottom of all this."

"I will answer for it that he is not. In the first place, he is a gentleman, though rough in his manners and very odd. And again he had no motive, none whatever. He has given up his practice, and cares more for Walton and Cotton than for all the Hunterian Museum. And he knew as well as I do the nature of the case. No, sir, you must not suspect him for a moment."

"Well, then, it must be that man—I forget his name—who was staying with Mr. Penniloe. A very sarcastic, unpleasant fellow, as several people said who spoke to him. He would take good care to leave no trace. He looked as crafty as Old Nick himself. It will never be found out, if that man did it. No, no, Jemmy, don't attempt to argue. It must be one of you three. It is neither you, nor Gronow; then it must be that Harrison Gowler."

(To be continued.)

THE TRAGEDY OF MR. THOMAS DOUGHTY.

To offer a new solution of a historical puzzle which wise men have agreed to leave unsolved is, I know, a foolhardy thing. A man, so to say, must go with his life in his hand, and let him arm himself as he may with authorities, he will be fortunate if he come off with a rag of decent reputation to his back. And especially will this be so if his proffered solution be dramatic or touched with romance. There, in a trice, you are face to face with the scholar's bias. For scholarship, as every one knows, will presume an episode in history to be prosaic until its guilt be clearly proved, and even then more likely than not she will leave the court grumbling. Of all the minor passions the bias of the average professor of history in favour of the uninteresting is the most obstinate. There is nothing to compare with it, unless it be the opposite bias of the historical novelist, but as that is usually classed with the manias the comparison is perhaps hardly decent.

With full knowledge then of the danger, I will venture to suggest an explanation that seems to render legible one of the most mysterious and tragic pages in our history,—craving only this indulgence, that all that has happened since the year 1577 shall for the time be put out of memory. For, I take it, a historian in pursuit of justice must be betrayed by his knowledge as often as by his ignorance; historical judgments must be led astray as much by an excess of information as by the lack of it. To conceive of a piece of action as it presented itself to the actors, to see it sharply defined as they saw it against a future still in darkness, requires imagination. It is a crude humour to be purged without mercy

by those who seek scholarship; and yet a humour that may serve on occasions. This, as I believe, being one of them, it is the indulgence of a little imagination that I would beg till the tale is told.

The story is an episode in Drake's great voyage round the world, and, for catastrophe, it tells how he came to put to death Mr. Thomas Doughty, his dearest friend. No one knows exactly why he did this; a score of reasons have been given. For the story is of so dramatic a radiance, and set so finely in majestic history, that its attraction is irresistible. Every one who approaches it must wonder as much as he regrets that an adventure so romantic has never been told from end to end. The reason is not hard to find, and there lies half the charm. It was, as I hope to show, the very greatness of the actors who filled the stage behind the two protagonists that made the mystery. There were high reasons of State for every one concerned that made it well for him to hold his tongue; and so it was that those to whom it fell to chronicle the time would either pass the story by, or give in its place some colourless version of the scandal that had reached their ears. Some thirty years after the great sailor was dead, a sort of authorised narrative was edited by his heir and nephew from the notes of Francis Fletcher, preacher and chaplain to the expedition. There, it is true, the story is given, but only in such a form as was fit for general ears. Doughty's name is not even mentioned; still less the name of that great Minister whose agent he was accused of being. It is from another account of the affair that we are able now to guess the truth; a violent coarse narrative, told it is plain by

one of Doughty's partisans, a man called Cooke. Camden had a copy of it, but in his history he did not use it; and so it lay forgotten till with other scraps it was brought to light some forty years ago. Yet even then, as though the shade of the great Minister still watched over those old intrigues, the lucky finder never uttered a whisper of the tale which it unconsciously reveals.

It was in Ireland that Drake and Doughty had come to know each other. Drake was back from his brilliant raid upon the Spanish Main with a booty that turned the heads of half the west-country mariners, and won him an indelible black mark in the Lord Admiral's book. So notorious indeed were his piracies, that there was no way to avoid arrest but to disappear among the old haunts of the Protestant rovers on the Irish coast. There he lay hid till the storm blew over, and some eighteen months after, in 1575, he was able, by offering his services to Essex, to resume his career as a reputable sea-officer. He brought to the Earl a letter of recommendation from Hawkins, his cousin, master, and patron; and Essex, weary and broken with his struggle to win back Ulster for his mistress by the power of his own Quixotic lance, accepted his services. Here, amidst the knot of valiant gentlemen and adventurous soldiers who surrounded the chivalrous Earl, Drake found Mr. Thomas Doughty. Doughty indeed used to boast in after days that it was he who had introduced Drake to Essex; but this Drake stoutly denied. "I think he never came about him," he once said, "for I, that was daily with my lord, never saw him there above once, and that was long after my entertainment with my lord." Drake was probably speaking the truth; Doughty was certainly lying. Among the Irish State Papers are two pay-sheets, which show beyond a doubt that Drake's "entertainment with my lord" did not begin until May 1st, 1575. That this was at least six months after

Doughty had been disgraced is equally certain, and is the more worth proving as the circumstances in which he lost his patron's favour have an important bearing on the question in hand.

"It would appear," says Devereux, "that Essex, in some of his private correspondence which is not extant, must have charged Leicester with unfair practices, and during the summer of 1574, their enmity broke out into an open quarrel, which was made up by the good offices of Lord Burghley, to whom Essex wrote, gratefully acknowledging the advice he had received from his Lordship. He enclosed to Burghley a copy of the letter of reconciliation he wrote to Leicester."¹

"My good lord," the letter as printed by Devereux begins, "I have received your lordship's letter, and have heard Flood's speech concerning the former report made to me by Doughty. Your lordship's letter and Flood's words do indeed concur, and are both so different from the former information made to me, as I see how perilous it is to believe any servant's speech, though I was the rather induced to give him credit, because he had before that time spoken as much as any other of his devotion to me and my cause. . . . And as I mean not to use the man any more in that trust or any way in soliciting my causes, so if I have been over earnest in my late letters, I pray you impute it to my plain and open nature." Later on Essex explains that Doughty had brought back from England, whither apparently he had been sent by his master on some confidential mission, a tale that Leicester had been charging him with ambition and ingratitude. This letter is dated "At Dublin, this 7th October, 1574."

That this Doughty was no other than Thomas Doughty is clear from a document in the Dublin Record Office, a transcript from which was kindly sent me by Mr. Barry. It is the "Account of George Vieve, servant to

¹ "Lives of the Devereux Earls of Essex," i. p. 76.

Walter, Earl of Essex, Governor-General of the Province of Ulster, in the north parts of Ireland from 1st August, 1573." The first relevant entry is one by which Viege charges himself with the receipt of £44 15s. 0d., "by the hands of your lordship's servant Thomas Doughty" for certain commissariat purposes. Then under date August 18th, 1574, is the following: "Pay for the charges of Mr. Broughton, Mr. Doughty, and their servants at Mr. Pulteney's by the space of days upon their coming from England, &c. viii." In November, 1574, Thomas Doughty receives £100 "for his Lordship's use," and after that there is no further trace of his being about Essex's person. The only other entries in which he appears are two relating to gifts of clothing which Essex made to his followers "for winter liveries."

So far then we see Thomas Doughty as a man already stained with intrigue, a typical adventurer of the sixteenth century, seeking to push his fortunes in the troubled waters that eddied round an active courtier, and not too nice in the means by which he curried favour with his patron. Nor must it be forgotten (and this is the real importance of Lord Essex's letter) that his character was known to Burghley, and known to him in circumstances that would not be likely to allow the knowledge to escape his memory. Drake of course had not the Lord Treasurer's advantages. He probably knew little of the man, beyond the outward charm with which he would seem to have been largely endowed. We have a picture of him drawn by an ardent admirer, which reveals him as a pattern courtier of the Renaissance. He was a scholar of no small pretensions and could display both Greek and Hebrew; he had served a campaign or two, and being now employed as a soldier could gracefully support the part; he had studied law too at the Temple, and could discourse in honeyed phrases the fashionable philosophy of the hour. Thus at least the chaplain Fletcher describes him, and

thus, no doubt, he appeared to Drake. Drake always loved a scholar, and during the short time they served together in Ireland Doughty seems to have won not only his confidence, but his warm and lasting affection. So close indeed did their relations grow that Drake even imparted to his friend the great secret with which his heart was full. Ever since that memorable day when from the boughs of a lofty tree in Darien he had first caught sight of the South Sea, and had prayed God to give him life and leave to sail upon it in an English ship, a raid into the Pacific had been the dream of his life. Hitherto the obstacles had been almost hopeless, but now that prospects were brighter, the two friends vowed to unite their efforts to bring the great adventure into being.

At the termination of Essex's mission in the autumn of 1575 it is probable that, with the bulk of the Earl's followers, the two friends came to London in search of further employment. Drake brought a letter of recommendation to Walsingham. Of this he says: "My lord of Essex wrote in my commendations unto Secretary Walsingham more than I was worthy, but belike I had deserved somewhat at his hands, and he thought me in his letters to be a fit man to serve against the Spaniards for my practice and experience that I had in that trade."¹ Doughty found service with Christopher Hatton. Here, in the cabinet of the rising favourite, was an atmosphere laden with the intrigue of the backstairs, and being, as we have seen, a man peculiarly obnoxious to such influences, Doughty seems to have soon caught the infection. There is evidence that he in some way managed to get himself connected with the slanders which charged Leicester with

¹ "The World Encompassed by Sir Francis Drake, being his next voyage to that to Nombre de Dios." Collated with an unpublished manuscript of Francis Fletcher, Chaplain to the Expedition; with Appendices illustrative of the same voyage, and introduction by W. S. W. Vaux. Printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1854. P. 215.

having poisoned Essex. Essex died in September 1576, and in the following November Doughty's brother John was thrown into prison, on what was then equivalent to a *lettre de cachet*. This was probably obtained at the instance of Leicester; for it was on petition to him that John Doughty was ultimately released; nor is there much room for doubt that the offence he had committed was uttering this libel against Leicester. Camden, at all events, seems to have had this idea; for in his account of the affair, which would appear to have been written before Cooke's narrative came into his possession, he confuses the two brothers, and calling the man whom Drake executed John Doughty, tells us that there wanted not some "who pretending to understand things better than others, gave out that Drake had in charge from Leicester to take off Doughty upon any pretence whatsoever, because he had reported abroad that the Earl of Essex was made away by the cunning practises of Leicester;" and it is certainly significant that on one occasion, according to Cooke,¹ Drake himself, in an outburst of anger, "gave divers furious words unto Thomas Doughty, as charging him to be the man that poisoned my lord of Essex as he thought." The point, however, is of no importance except as showing that, during the year preceding the departure of Drake's expedition, the two Doughtys were marked men, and mixed up with one of the most notorious scandals of the time.

Nor was Drake himself less known to the Government. The Court at this time was divided, it may be fairly said, in so far at least as Drake's relations to it were concerned, into a peace-party and a war-party. In the war-party Walsingham and Leicester were the leading spirits, Leicester from his soldierly ambition, Walsingham from a desire to force on a war, which his sagacity told him to be inevitable, before the Queen's bewildering foreign policy should have driven her natural

allies into the arms of Spain. To the peace-party belonged the friends of Spain and others, who, like Burghley and Bacon, believed that England's prosperity depended on her Spanish trade, and that war without perfected alliances against so powerful a prince as Philip was suicidal. As it appeared to those who had every means of knowing, it was only by consummate diplomacy that Spain had been induced to refrain hitherto from active hostilities, and in these negotiations a constant stumbling-block to the English diplomatists had been Drake's piratical reprisals in the Caribbean Sea. Among the Spanish State-Papers² is a "Draft answer to the complaints of Spain," and at the point where Drake's case comes to be dealt with, the document is hardly to be deciphered for erasures, corrections, and interlineations. No words could more distinctly tell of the worry and annoyance he had already caused in the Council; nor is it conceivable that the more sober of the Queen's advisers would easily permit him to get them into such a scrape again.

When Drake reached London, however, it was to find the bolder counsels of Walsingham in the ascendant. The year was closing in with every prospect of immediate war; and it is not therefore surprising that, having presented his letter to Walsingham, Drake was one day gratified by the sight of the Secretary's grim face in his lodgings. As soon as they were alone Walsingham began to tell him that her Majesty had received divers injuries from the King of Spain for which she desired to have revenge, and, unfolding a map, asked Drake to note upon it where he thought Philip might be most annoyed. But the wary seaman would not commit himself. He was too good a Protestant not to share the anxiety of the assembling Parliament about the succession. "But I told him," to use Drake's own words as Cooke has reported them, "some part of my mind, but refused to set my

¹ "The World Encompassed," p. 203.

² S. P. Spain, xxvi.

hand to anything, affirming that her Majesty was mortal, and that if it should please God to take her Majesty away, it might be that some prince might reign that might be in league with the King of Spain, and then would mine own hand be a witness against myself." With that the eager Secretary had to rest content for the time, but the Queen was bent upon mischief. Let Drake tell what followed upon Walsingham's overtures. "Then was I," he says, "shortly after and in an evening, sent for unto her Majesty by Secretary Walsingham, but came not to her Majesty that night, for it was late. But the next day, coming to her presence, these or the like words (she spake), 'Drake, so it is that I would gladly be revenged on the King of Spain, for divers injuries I have received.' And said further that I was the only man that might do this exploit, and withal craved my advice therein. Who told her Majesty of the small good that was to be done in Spain, (and that) the only way to annoy him was by his Indies." Thus like some distressed princess to her own knight-errant, she appealed to him, and the adventurous young sailor was no more proof than the rest against the charm with which she could win the devotion of almost every man she chose. The matter was clinched by the Queen's undertaking to subscribe a thousand crowns to the syndicate which he must promote for his immortal project.

Such is Drake's own account of how the voyage was set on foot. Doughty of course gave it quite a different complexion. He always boasted that it was to his influence with his patron Christopher Hatton that Drake owed his introduction to the Queen. As Hatton was a share holder in the enterprise, and as Drake thought it wise at the crisis of the voyage to change the name of his flag-ship from the Pelican to the Golden Hind in Hatton's honour (whose crest or badge was a hind trippant or) it is difficult to doubt that there was not some

foundation for Doughty's claim. It is however, unnecessary to disbelieve either story. The truth probably is that not long after the interview which Drake describes the Queen drew back. In the spring of 1576 the political situation had entirely changed. Elizabeth had quarrelled with her too Protestant Parliament, and she had dismissed in a pet the Dutch envoys who had come over to concert an alliance against Spain; once more the peace-party was triumphant, and this is probably the explanation, otherwise unaccountable, of Drake's inaction through the year. Early in the following spring, however, he had certainly obtained the Queen's consent; the organisation of the expedition was in full swing, and it is not unlikely that it was Hatton's influence with his fond mistress that had removed the difficulties. Nevertheless it may still have been at Walsingham's instigation that Hatton was working. As the summer of 1577 went on and the breach between the Queen and her natural ally widened, Walsingham was in despair, and may well have seen in Drake an instrument to force Elizabeth into the war to which he could not persuade her. He may well have seen that a piratical raid into the South Sea would be an outrage of such magnitude that Spain would be compelled to treat it as a *casus belli*, and with this in view he perhaps induced Hatton to approach the Queen once more. Drake himself certainly regarded this as the real meaning of his expedition, and afterwards proclaimed openly to his followers that they had come to set by the ears three mighty princes "her Majesty and the Kings of Spain and Portugal."¹ The details of the intrigue must of course remain a matter of conjecture, but that the whole affair was in fact a party move against Burghley is made certain by a speech of Drake's in which he distinctly stated that the Queen in giving her consent to his voyage had laid upon him strict

¹ "The World Encompassed," p. 216.

injunctions "that of all men my Lord Treasurer should not know it."¹

But to keep so grave a secret from Burghley was no light task. He cannot have been for one moment at a loss. His complete system of observation must have quickly informed him that something serious was in the wind which Walsingham and the Queen were concocting with the most dangerous of those lawless adventurers against whose semi-piratical reprisals he so consistently set his face, and that Hatton and Sir William Wynter, the Queen's admiral-at-sea, both of whom he suspected about this time of being "comforters of pirates,"² to say nothing of Hawkins the arch-enemy of Spain, were all engaged in the enterprise. Is it possible to conceive that in circumstances so suspicious the wary Minister sat still and did nothing? Will any one doubt that when the sturdy patriot had so much reason to believe that mischief was brewing for his country that he did not set about getting to the bottom of it?

It is Cooke again who opens our eyes. "There it fell out," he says in his report of Doughty's trial, "that upon further talk Master Doughty said that my Lord Treasurer had a plot [a plan] of the voyage. 'No, that he hath not,' quoth Master Drake. The other replied that he had. 'How?' quoth Master Drake. 'He had it from me,' quoth Master Doughty. 'Lo! my masters,' quoth he [Drake], 'what this fellow hath done. God will have his treacheries all known. For her Majesty gave me special commandment that of all men my Lord Treasurer should not know it, but to see he [*sic*] his own mouth hath betrayed him.' So this was a special article against him to cut his throat and greatly he [Drake] seemed to rejoice at this advantage."

We know Doughty to have been a

liar. He may have been lying now; but at any rate it is plain that Drake believed him and that Cooke did too. And what reason is there to disbelieve him? It is exactly what we should have expected. Burghley's first move would most certainly be to suborn some one in the confidence of some of the men he suspected. What more natural than that he should send for the time-serving adventurer, whose character he knew of old, and who had the ear of two of the principal promoters? The very tool he wanted was lying under his hand. Nor is the passage quoted from Cooke the only evidence that this actually was the course he took. Among the depositions taken at the trial is one where Fletcher, the chaplain, himself swears he had heard Doughty say "that our general did know and was witness that my Lord Treasurer of England sent for the said T. D. two or three times to be his secretary and he refused it to come with him." That Burghley offered such a man a secretaryship, or that it would have been refused if he had, is not to be believed. It is a transparent lie; and the statement is of no value except as showing that the real object of Burghley's summons was something Doughty did not care to divulge. With regard to the rest of his boast it is different. As we have seen there is every reason to believe that he really was sent for; and it is certainly significant that Drake is nowhere reported to have disputed the assertion, although he seems never to have lost an opportunity of contradicting the prisoner's boasting of his connection with other influential politicians when he believed it to be false. Such evidence is not perhaps sufficient to amount to proof that would justify a charge of dishonourable action against a great statesman; but in the absence of any reason for disbelieving it, it is at least fair testimony that it was the intention of the promoters to keep the enterprise from Lord Burghley; that he

¹ "The World Encompassed," p. 204.

² Hist. MSS. Rep. Hatfield MSS., ii. pp. 156, 162.

nevertheless did secretly obtain full information of their project; and that it was from Doughty that he obtained it.

Now, assuming this to be the case for the time, let us for a moment pass with open sympathies into Burghley's closet, as Doughty leaves it. The Lord Treasurer, it is plain, was face to face with a highly difficult situation. Both to his caution and his honesty it was a very detestable scheme indeed. As he saw the thing, it can only have been in the Queen a piece of folly that was simply disastrous; in the war-party a wicked and reckless attempt to regain their lost position. We, who are wise after the event, can have no doubt that Walsingham and Drake, in their attempt to precipitate a war on which they saw the salvation of their country depend, were both actuated by the most heroic motives; but to Burghley it was by no means so clear. His patriotism, his prudence, and his devotion to Elizabeth could only tell him that no effort must be spared to extricate her from the trap into which she had been enticed. His self-willed mistress and her love of profitable adventures were too well known to him to allow any hope that with such formidable names against him he would be able to induce her to reconsider her rash resolution. Besides she had given the strictest orders that "of all men the Lord Treasurer should not know of it," and the only official information Burghley had of the obnoxious expedition was that a trading-venture to Alexandria had been arranged under Drake's command. It was in this disguise the expedition was to sail. There was nothing except the secret information Burghley had obtained to show that it was anything but what it pretended to be, nothing on which to ground a demand that it should be stopped. The difficulties of open action were thus very great. He may even have doubted the correctness of the information.

It was a project almost incredible in its daring, and as we have seen he knew his information came from a highly tainted source. In such a position no statesman of the sixteenth century would have hesitated a moment in adopting secret measures to prevent the disaster which threatened his policy, and least of all Burghley, whose whole career is one long story of astute and disinterested expedients to save his mistress from her evil counsellors and from herself. Some such secret measures he must certainly have taken, and even were there no evidence at hand of what they were, we should at least know what to expect. "Whenever," Mr. Froude has well said, "the veil that overhangs Elizabeth's court is lifted treacherous influences are seen invariably at work. . . . The struggle between the two great parties in the State was nowhere hotter than in the immediate neighbourhood of the Queen, and every ambassador sent to a foreign court, every general in command of an expedition, found some one attached to him whose business it was to tie his hands and thwart his enterprises." It was left to Burghley to hinder what he could not prevent; and whatever else he did we may say with absolute certainty that he took care to have one of his army of secret agents at Drake's elbow. Who can really doubt that the agent was Doughty? The probabilities of the case, combined with the direct evidence of his uncontradicted admissions, raise a very strong presumption that it was he; and this presumption is raised yet higher by an examination of his conduct during the voyage. By no other theory is his behaviour explicable except on the assumption that he had been employed by some one to prevent Drake from ever getting into the Pacific.

His first care seems to have been to form round him the nucleus of a party. His brother John was got out of prison and joined to the expedition.

Another man whom Doughty specially recommended had to be cashiered in disgrace before the expedition finally sailed,¹ and later on several others fell under suspicion of being his accomplices.² Meanwhile in ignorance or disbelief of his friend's treachery, Drake was throwing all his ardour into the organisation of his enterprise. Some warning of Doughty's intentions he seems certainly to have had before he sailed. "The very model of them," says the authorised narrative, "was shewed and declared to our general in his garden at Plymouth before his setting sail, which yet he either would not credit as true or likely of a person whom he loved dearly and was persuaded of to love him likewise unfeignedly, or thought by love and benefits to remove and remedy it if there were any evil purposes conceived against him." And so the crabbed tale goes on; he continued to treat the man with undiminished favour and confidence, and flew into a passion if any one ventured to disclose to him "how the fire increased that threatened the destruction of the whole voyage together with his own."³

Nor was any facility wanting to enable the conspirator to feed the flames. He had not, it is true, any official position in the squadron; but, as was the custom in these days with well-born volunteers, he was permitted by Drake to act on occasions as his lieutenant and second-in-command. The younger Essex during the expedition of Drake and Norreys against Lisbon was in exactly the same position, and Doughty used his advantage on every occasion to make it appear that the rank he owed to the general's favour was his by right. Opportunities were not wanting, and Drake's infatuation committed to Doughty the conduct of every honourable service that came to hand. As consistently Doughty used every one of them to undermine his friend's

authority and to enhance his own. When troops were landed in the Cape Verde Islands to seek for provisions, it was Doughty who shared the command, and according to one witness he improved the occasion by tampering with the men.⁴ When the great Portuguese prize was taken off St. Jago, it was Doughty again who was placed in charge, and this time his move was to accuse Thomas Drake, who was also aboard, of pilfering the cargo. Upon inquiry the charge was not substantiated; on the contrary, property belonging to the prisoners was found to be in Doughty's own possession, and Drake told him with an angry oath, that he knew it was Francis Drake and not Thomas he was trying to disparage. Still he would not give up all hope of his friend, and so far listened to the intercession of the other gentlemen, as merely to order the offender back to the flagship while he himself continued the voyage across the Atlantic in the prize. But clemency was wasted on Doughty. No sooner was he on board the Pelican than he called the ship's company together and made them a speech in which he announced that the admiral had placed him in command of the flag-ship as his most trusted officer, and had deputed to him all the powers of the Queen's commission.⁵ Naturally enough it was not long before complaints reached Drake's ears that Doughty was exceeding his authority. There are traces even of an attempt to induce the crew to desert and carry off the vessel.⁶ But whether this charge be true or not, it is certain that Doughty's conduct became so outrageous that in mid-ocean Drake sent for him and without permitting him to set foot on the prize ordered him in disgrace into the victual-ship which accompanied the squadron. Still Doughty never

⁴ *Ib.*, p. 172. For "He of Man" read "He of Maio."

⁵ Harl. MSS. 6221, fol. 7. Omitted by Vaux.

⁶ "The World Encompassed," p. 165.

¹ "The World Encompassed," pp. 171, 187.

² *Ib.*, p. 209.

³ *Ib.*, p. 62.

ceased his efforts to paralyse the undertaking. By fostering the jealousy which in every expedition of that time existed to a dangerous degree between the navigating staff and the gentlemen volunteers, he did his best to set the officers by the ears. The men he continued to assail with promises and cajolery, and even sought to increase his ascendancy over them by claiming skill in the black art.¹ Nothing was wanting to favour his pretension. So terrible and persistent was the foul weather with which the squadron was tormented as it struggled southward along the American coast, that Drake himself seems to have come to doubt it was brewed by his friend's magic; and finally driven to desperation he placed both the brothers under arrest with strict orders that no one should speak to them, and that neither of them on pain of death should set pen to paper nor yet read, but what every man might see and understand.²

It was in Port St. Julian on the coast of Patagonia that Drake's long struggle with treachery came to an end. It was here that Magellan some sixty years before had put in to finally refit for his famous exploit; it was here that he had been compelled to hang two of his mutinous lieutenants who had attempted to stop further progress; and it was here after struggling for six months into a storm-land on which God's back seemed turned, that Drake again found traces of Christian men. For there on the desolate shore stood the stump of Magellan's gallows, and beneath it were found the skeletons of his mutineers. How far the desperate admiral was influenced by what may well have appeared to the old navy-preacher's son a sign from Heaven, let each one judge for himself; but certain it is that here, over against the grim relic of his renowned predecessor, Drake brought his friend to trial. Whether Drake's commission authorised so high a

proceeding is more than doubtful. He did not produce it at the trial, nor were the proceedings by way of court-martial. It was in all respects a lynch-court, with Drake as president and his comrades as jury, that found Doughty guilty; and it was by vote of the assembled crews that he was condemned to death. What followed exactly it is difficult to distil from the various conflicting accounts, but the story which seems best to reconcile them is that Drake gave the culprit the choice between execution and marooning. Cooke even says that Drake offered to shoot him with his own hand, in order that for their old friendship's sake he might die a soldier's death; but Doughty chose the block. To the last there seems to have been no ill-blood between them. It was as though two courtly gamblers had played for a high stake. Drake took payment without exultation, and Doughty lost like a gentleman. On the day appointed for the end the two friends in token of mutual forgiveness took the Sacrament together, and then, as the block was made ready hard by, they all caroused together in a farewell banquet to their condemned comrade. The feasting over, Doughty craved a few words apart with Drake, saying no man knows what; and immediately after "with bills and staves" the prisoner was marched to execution. "Then Master Doughty embracing the general, naming him his good captain, bade him farewell, and so, bidding the whole company farewell, he laid his head on the block." The axe fell, and as the headsman held the head aloft, Drake in time-honoured form cried out, "Lo, this is the end of traitors!"

And who can doubt, reading the story step by step, that Doughty was a traitor, that his crime was no common mutiny, but a plot elaborately conceived and carried out with cold and persistent skill? By no theory is it conceivable that such a man

¹ "The World Encompassed," pp. 166, 173.

² *Ib.*, pp. 199, 200.

would have sought deliberately to ruin an enterprise from which he had so much to hope, unless he was employed to that end by some one who could make it worth his while. It was in the power of but two persons to do so. One was the King of Spain; but that it was he there is no hint or sign. He had no ambassador in England at the time, his agent was a prisoner in the Tower, and no warning of their danger reached the defenceless settlements on the Pacific coast.¹ The other was Burghley. The direct evidence that it was he we have seen. Slight as it is, it is quite as much as could be expected to leak out of so secret a piece of statecraft. In corroboration of that evidence, we have seen how his honest detestation of piracy, and his single-hearted desire to avoid offending Spain, render it impossible to believe he did not make some attempt to avert the danger that he saw hanging over his Queen and country. Of such an attempt, if we reject the presumption of his privity to Doughty's action, there is no trace.

But the case does not rest here. There is still the sequel, and everything we know of it leads to the same conclusion. When Drake to the marvel of all the world came back with his prodigious plunder, the Spanish Ambassador at once demanded his condemnation as a pirate. Burghley supported the demand. Fully alive to his danger now that diplomatic relations with Spain were restored, Drake began scattering presents right and left. Besides the Lord Admiral, Burghley was almost the only man who refused his bribe. Yet so formidable was the opposition with which Drake was confronted that for six months the world was in doubt whether his reward was to be a rope or an accolade; and it is certain that if the party in the Council who were acting against him and his noble shareholders could have used

Doughty's death for their purpose they would not have hesitated to do so. But it is equally certain that for some reason the affair was hushed up. The evidence we know was actually laid before Dr. Lewes of the Admiralty Court, but nothing came of it.² It was not that Doughty's brother, who had come home with Drake thirsting for revenge, did not demand redress, or that the law was not on his side. By a curious chance we know not only that he did take proceedings, but also that Drake's commission would not avail to stop them. For in the great debate which took place in 1628 on martial law, Sir Edward Coke quoted the case as a precedent. The report which Rushworth has preserved to us, in that pregnant simplicity our law-books know no more, runs thus: "Drake slew Doughty beyond sea. Doughty's brother desired an appeal in the Constable's and Marshal's court; resolved by Wray and the other judges he may sue there."³ It was decided, that is to say, by the Lord Chief Justice and the whole court of Queen's Bench that Drake, having nothing to show against the rule, was to be tried for murder by court-martial. And yet every one is agreed that the trial never took place. John Doughty was willing enough to proceed; so fierce indeed was his resentment that, despairing of legal redress, he not long afterwards undertook for a great reward offered by the King of Spain to assassinate his brother's judge. Such being John Doughty's frame of mind, it must indeed have been strong unanimity in the Council which could prevent him from availing himself of the solemn decision in his favour. What will explain that unanimity except a something underneath which Drake's opponents and Mendoza's friends dared not risk to have unearthed?

If the story which Cooke's narrative unmistakably suggests be true,

¹ S. P. Dom. Eliz. 1582, cliv. fol. 63.

² See documents collected by Peralta in his "History of Costa Rica," &c.

³ Rushworth, abridged edition, vol. ii., p. 4.

the mystery is made plain. It is a solution which may be right or may be wrong. We may treat Doughty's admissions as worthless, although they were against interest; we may call Cooke unworthy of belief, although on the vital points he is corroborated by the depositions; but of argument against the probability of the story I have been unable to meet with a shred, except an outcry that to conceive Burghley capable of such conduct is an insult to his memory. To think of the Minister, whose name we are accustomed to associate with all that is great in Elizabeth's reign, deliberately setting to work to mar the success of the most famous achievement of her time, is an idea startling enough to throw any historian out of a judicial attitude. His mind revolts from even suspecting the great Lord Treasurer

on evidence so fragmentary of a disgraceful piece of policy. But to say that he set Doughty to thwart Drake's raid into the South Sea, is to lay to his charge nothing of which he need be ashamed. For although we who know what followed have come to regard Drake's triumphant lawlessness as one of the brightest points in our national reputation, Burghley with the future still dark could see it as nothing but a monstrous piece of piracy which, if successful, must plunge his country into an unequal war. In braving his mistress's displeasure to avert the threatened disaster by means which were fully recognised in the political morality of the day, he was doing an act that, so far from being disgraceful, can only add lustre to his almost blameless career.

JULIAN CORBETT.

A FORGOTTEN WORTHY.

THE inquiring traveller who visits the North-West Provinces of India during the cold weather soon becomes acquainted with the name of James Thomason. He sees the Ganges canal, after a course of a thousand miles, return its tribute water at Cawnpore to the mother stream. Then perhaps, passing northward, he falls in with the same canal leaving the Ganges at Hurdwar, and visits the extensive hydraulic works between that place and Roorkee. And he learns that the master-engineer of this great undertaking was Sir Proby Cautley; but that the man who, when the project was declining, wrote about it, fought for it, entreated for it, obtained money for it, and in short, rendered its completion a possibility, was James Thomason. The traveller will further find that the prosperous and useful institution for training civil engineers and the promotion of technical education in mechanics at Roorkee bears the name of Thomason College, in remembrance of its founder and his fostering care. And if our imaginary wanderer is a member of the House of Commons, and would desire, in a few hours' conversation, to acquire a mastery of the revenue theory and practice in these territories (though the subject is a trifle more difficult than bimetallism and about as lively to the uninitiated as cremation), his monitor will be sure to inform him that certain views, provisions, and injunctions are termed the Thomasonian System, and, whether approved or opposed, this has to be reckoned with before an understanding of existing facts is reached. Lastly, if history is referred to by the inquirer, it will be ascertained that for ten busy, progressive, and regenerative years, (from 1843, that

is, to 1853), the government of the North-Western Provinces, including then Delhi to the north and the Nerbudda territory to the south, was in the hands of this same individual, the James Thomason aforesaid.

Yet probably few men who have ever succeeded as administrators in India are less known to the public in general. Those undoubtedly who have studied the problem of our rule in the East have, in the course of their researches, become aware that a remarkable personality had dominated the revenue settlement in the North-West, and indirectly had exercised great influence on what was effected in that direction in the Punjaub and attempted in Oude. Among such inquirers, who include Sir Henry Maine and other notables, surprise has been common that no means existed by which some idea of the man, Thomason, could be obtained: what he was, what he thought, what he said, and how he lived. They might well have recalled the restricted art of a Mahomedan drawing, where the achievements and surroundings of man can be represented, but where, when the human figure is sought with interest, the sacred veto produces a blank.

Mr. Thomason has been dead forty years, and till this spring, beyond a few casual notices, no biography of any sort has been attempted. The series of "Indian Rulers," edited by Sir William Hunter at Oxford, naturally led those who were acquainted with the circumstances to suppose that the deficiency would be at length supplied. And when it was understood that there would be a life of Thomason, and that its execution would be intrusted to Sir Richard Temple, it was felt that all

that complete knowledge of the work achieved, and affectionate esteem for the worker could produce, might be expected. But, as if some destiny of oblivion unrelentingly pursued the fame of Thomason, we observe that his biography is not to be included in the series of Rulers, but is to be regarded as a supplementary volume, and is only advertised as "Uniform with the Rulers of India."

It is not my intention to attempt any detailed criticism of Sir Richard Temple's little book. It is a warm panegyric, couched in carefully chosen language, and with due attention paid to all points admitting of picturesque treatment. The professional subjects are discussed with the accuracy insured by long familiarity, and possible differences of opinion are occasionally recognised. For there are those who do not agree with all Mr. Thomason's views; who consider that his system broke down partially in Oude, and that even in his own provinces the money-lender is insensibly becoming the middle-man it was his great object to eradicate. These will be able, if they choose, to strive to modify some of the encomiums pronounced on theory and practice alike. My simple purpose is to illustrate Mr. Thomason's personal character by a few anecdotes which would scarcely have harmonised with Sir Richard's method and manner, but may be looked upon as notes or an appendix, by those who have perused his pages. A single word of explanation to the effect that, during the last few years of the Lieutenant-Governor's life, I was Assistant-Secretary to his government may help to guarantee the correctness of what is related.

Persons who are interested in the early history of Protestant missions in Bengal, will be aware that Mr. Simeon of Cambridge was one of their first promoters and warmest friends. His design was to imbue chaplains going out in the service of the Company with the missionary spirit; for of course clergymen, if circum-

spect in language and actions, had great advantages from being thus situated. There was very little that the Company in those days would permit to be done for the soldiers; and therefore in the case of an industrious and eager chaplain there was ample leisure for languages, translations, native schools, and so forth, without neglect of ordinary duties. And chaplains not only worked under theegis of their employers, but they carried more influence as servants of the government. There were four men especially, who owed what they considered their call to the East to the earnest admonitions of Charles Simeon, or the influence of those who worked with him; their names were Henry Martyn, Claudius Buchanan, Daniel Corrie, and Thomas Thomason. Very recently there have been consecrated, in the well-known church of the Holy Trinity at Cambridge, both painted windows and tablets to the memory of these remarkable men. James Thomason was the eldest son of the chaplain, and his guardianship, during his education in England, was intrusted to Simeon himself. It is unnecessary, in these late days, to dwell on the opinions of those who agreed with Simeon, further than to recall that they were virtually the same which had cropped up in Puritanism, and had appeared later again in the higher Nonconformity, and were, in fact, Calvinism, purged of its presumption and fatality, and rendered practical by the enjoinder of those good works whose value the Genevan theoretically set at naught. James Thomason accepted for himself the views inherited from his father, and adhered to them to the end of his life. Sir Richard Temple is therefore quite right in saying that religion cannot be disregarded in a portrait of his subject, because it was woven into the very texture of the man's personality. But prejudices are so easily roused on topics of the kind, that some of the dissatisfied in his own service were desirous, at one time, of

saddling a charge of narrowness on their chief, and to call in the aid of a great humourist by trying to launch into popular use the nickname of "Stiggins." The dissenting minister is not one of Dickens's best hits, and the representation was founded more upon popular calumny than observation. But had the sketch been a success, it would, at best, have only unmasked a sensualist and a hypocrite. It is but fair to the incapable satirists of the North-West to suppose that they did not mean more than to protest against possible restrictive sectarianism, or a moral discipline bearing hard on human nature. Their fears were entirely unfounded. The object of their alarm kept his faith for personal use; and though he naturally preferred the society of those who agreed with him on the highest interests, he made large allowances for those who differed, displayed a most catholic spirit, and was especially desirous of utilising ability wherever he found it. Just as Faraday gave his week-days to the boldest flights of science, and on Sundays was discovered in his Sandemanian chapel, so this good man pursued large projects in his daily work into which no tinge of sectarianism was allowed to enter, but on Sundays he strictly cultivated his cherished opinions. Sir Richard speaks calmly of Cooper's sermons read out in camp, or other places where no church existed. But perhaps he has forgotten them, or may never have undergone them. My recollection of them is still singularly vivid; they were arid as the desert, colourless as the sands that form it.

Mr. Thomason was very courteous to the members of the Latin church at Agra, entertaining their bishop at dinner with marked cordiality. But how difficult it is to please everybody! Some of the guests objected to the prelate being asked to say grace. The poor gentleman did not know an English grace, and if he had repeated an Italian one, not a soul in

the room could have followed it. He relied on supposed scholarship, and gave a Latin form. "What gibberish is he talking?" was overheard on a certain occasion. "The Lord's Prayer backwards," replied a sturdy Presbyterian.

No one could be more forbearing than Mr. Thomason to the minor deficiencies of work which was really useful and trustworthy in the main. A case is remembered of an officer who had been active in organising the camping grounds, and the supplies of grain and fodder in connection with them, on the Grand Trunk road. He had a talent for order and arrangement, and all went well till he came to report on his achievements. Then it seemed as if the writing faculty gave way. His sentences ran something in this fashion: "The superintendent here is careless in his accounts, which though he has been threatened I should report him, continues. One more chance has, however, been explained to him as rather from consideration than that he is likely to improve, but certainly not again to be overlooked." The sense glimmered, but the form halted. Orders being asked as to how this strange farrago was to be printed, the answer was: "Alter as little as possible. Where practicable, gently guide the sentences into grammar. I would not on any account have the writer discouraged." Again, a young man had fallen out with his superior officer, the Commissioner. He had been careless and was reported. When called upon by the Lieutenant-Governor to explain himself, he wrote a long, elaborate, and able reply. It did not really, however, alter the facts of the case, and the delinquent was reprimanded; but the remark was privately made: "This young fellow must be kept in view; if he can write so lucidly and at such length when he is wrong, he might be made to do well in a right direction."

Mr. Thomason grew absorbed in anything that interested him, and on

this account he had to abstain generally from novels, a branch of reading that got too strong a hold on him. But it is remembered that when "Bleak House" was coming out, he was very eager about it, and the sayings of Mr. Bucket were frequently alluded to at table.

He was entirely free from all pomposness and pretension, but he knew that as an Oriental ruler he must insist on due courtesy to the dignity which had been intrusted to him. One hot season an independent Rajah who lived to the south of Agra was passing through the place, and encamped not far from Government House. He sent an intimation that he wished to pay his respects; and the proper ceremonies being examined, it was found that Mr. Thomason ought to meet the prince half-way, and conduct him to an interview. The hour fixed for the Rajah to be at the rendezvous was five in the afternoon. So thither, at the time agreed upon, we all went on a bunch of elephants, with cavalry escort and everything etiquette expected. But when the meeting-ground was reached there was no Rajah nor any sign of him. It is a weakness of Oriental potentates to try to extend or amplify the compliments they are entitled to; and the prince thought that if he was conducted from his tents it would look like promotion. But Thomason would not advance an inch beyond the proper line, and after waiting a quarter of an hour, he laughed and said to the head civilian, "Well, Commissioner *sahib*, what do you say? I think we must go home." Home accordingly we went; but we had hardly got into the house when there was a tumult outside; kettle-drums beating, camel-guns firing, titles sonorously bawled out, horses neighing, and the chink and jingle of the theatrical procession that surrounds Indian royalty. The pageant streamed up the shrubberies, and the Rajah in hot haste, with those of his attendants who had the required rank, entered the large dining-

room. Not a word was said on either side about the delay. While the prince was receiving his *pan* and *atar*, there was time to observe that he was arrayed in chain-armour which seemed inappropriate to the temperature. It came out afterwards, that on the night he reached Agra one of his servants attempted to cut him down with a sword, but was himself killed before he could effect his object.

But another time Mr. Thomason for a moment entirely forgot his position, and allowed nature to extinguish convention. He was on tour close to the frontier, in the Muttra district. Hearing of his advance, the Rajah of Bhurtpore asked him to pay Deeg a visit, where there was once a celebrated citadel, taken by Lord Lake on Christmas Day, 1804. Ancient chiefs had once lived there, and buildings of an ornamental nature still remained, situated in gardens which again were equipped with fountains and water-works. The invitation was accepted, and the frontier crossed, Deeg being reached in the forenoon. In the course of the entertainment the Rajah and Mr. Thomason were seated together on a small marble platform. On all four sides of this, at a signal, jets of water began to rise till at last the two were completely inclosed in a cabinet of fluid sparkling in the sun. The Rajah was Bulwunt Singh, often called the Company's child, as it was on his behalf that the siege of Bhurtpore was undertaken in 1826. He was an amiable man, though too indolent for a good prince; in person exceedingly stout and unwieldy, and his features almost obliterated by small-pox. He wore on this day round his bull neck a string of huge pearls which were, it was understood, of great value. When the watery chamber had been sufficiently shown, the jets gradually sank, and as they died out the ducts for a while were flushed with the ebbing stream. As the Rajah turned round to give an order, the tension of his

neck broke the thread of the necklace, and splash fell all the pearls into the brimming conduit. It was too much for Mr. Thomason. Pity and the desire to be useful prevailed; down he went on his knees, and was seen fishing for the precious things with dripping wristbands. The Rajah was horrified. He would not stir, but resting his hand gently on his visitor's shoulder entreated him to resume his seat. He would not even speak about the pearls, but merely remarked, "Nothing whatever has happened."

With regard to physical acquirements and tastes, the training of Thomason as a youth was unfavourable to the attainment of skill or readiness. He was retained in India till he was ten, and reached home overgrown and elongated from the climate, a hot-house slip. He was never at a public school, and at Haileybury College chose, very sensibly, the occupations of a reading man. In after life he tried to make up deficiencies by courage. Though lame from an accident, and lame in a manner to prevent the knee holding the saddle, he would and did ride a high-spirited horse in his winter circuits. He taught himself to swim and dive after he was forty. But he certainly did not take sufficient exercise. He trifled occasionally with the gun, but his heart was not in the matter; and a day in the jungles of Rohilcund after tiger ended, as report declared, in some one shooting a heifer, and in the presentation of a petition for damages from a bereaved peasant. But there is no evidence that the head of the government committed this oversight; and it is possible that the actual delinquent, to avoid exposure, smiled and looked sly, as if respect had sealed his lips, but really in the hope that his master would be credited with the achievement.

Caring little for racing, and indeed not approving of the betting part, Mr. Thomason was magnanimous enough to subscribe handsomely to the meetings, looking upon sporting

men as a popular element in society, and with a right, in their turn, to claim public attention.

One year, in the cold weather, his winter tour took him and the camp to Benares. In that city a prince had arrived from Rajpootana on a pilgrimage. His territory was small but very ancient, and his family of the best blood. He forwarded a notice to the effect that he desired to call on the Lieutenant-Governor, but mentioned that he had first to make a claim in the Persian office. He was prepared to show from documents he had with him, that he possessed an hereditary right to smoke in the presence of the Suzerain. His ancestors had always exercised this privilege with the Mogul or his immediate deputies, and he considered that it was only fair that the representative of the English power should recognise the usage. The question was investigated, and the prince's statement was found correct. Mr. Thomason was not to ask him to smoke, but was to send for his own hookah, and then the prince might call for his. Send for his own hookah! yes, that sounded easy, but the staff knew that Mr. Thomason had Goethe's hatred of tobacco, and that its cloud could not be admitted within his lips without producing such qualms and distresses as were calculated to upset the decorum of an interview. He was himself consulted, and thought something might be effected with the assistance of tea. There was, however, no possibility of making tea emit smoke of any sort. But to carry out his wishes, a spoonful of tea was put in just to weight a loose brown paper bag, and this bag, rendered rough at the edges, was found, when ignited, capable of producing a distinctly visible vapour. Society was saved. The prince arrived, and was duly seated with ceremony. The hookah of the British power was brought in; the mouthpiece was grasped, and the brown paper, surreptitiously set on fire, fumed sufficiently. The prince then commanded

his pipe, and the whole difficulty ended, as it had begun,—in smoke.

Care has been taken not to say anything which could be found in Sir Richard Temple's book. It will be gratifying to Mr. Thomason's friends, if the English public expresses, in any way, an appreciation of the man and his work. Nearly half a century ago he fondly believed that the old country was watching his career. The old country, it is to be feared, does not extend its sympathies so readily to a distant land and an unseen administrator. But Sir Richard has shown that the authorities at home were slowly learning his value. The offer of

the Governorship of Madras was on its way out to him, when he was lying, stricken by his short, fatal illness, at Bareilly in September, 1853. And it was authoritatively stated at the time that he was to be made a baronet. But ten fierce years of labour and responsibility had worn him out. He had had the approval of his conscience; that was sufficient for him. The honours were deserved, but they came too late. He was dying and did not want them. The shows and shadows of worldly success were fading before considerations of greater moment,—of deeper interest.

J. W. SHERER.

THE PERPETUAL CURATE.

THE church belonging to the little seaside parish in which my boyhood was passed stood amidst green fields a mile or two away from the sea. It had been originally a tiny building, whose chief claim to notice was the quaint little Saxon porch under which strange antiquaries might occasionally be seen uncouthly gesticulating to the admiration of the natives. In my time the glimpses of the old structure which the giant yew-trees, beneath whose boughs slumbered the farmers and fishermen and the fishermen-farmers (for the trades were frequently combined) of past generations, grudgingly permitted to worshippers approaching by the field path, were rather misleading. Such of the antiquaries aforesaid who chanced to be acquainted with Virgil may even have recalled in their disappointment the poet's description of Scylla:

A beauteous maid above, but magic arts
With barking dogs deformed her nether
parts.

The seaside village had once aspired to become a watering-place, and the churchwardens had undertaken the duty of providing the additional accommodation for which it was hoped that visitors would soon be eagerly competing. Having no genius like Scott at their call, or indeed any money to pay him with, and being therefore left to their own resources (which they no doubt considered equal to the occasion), these officials ran out at the back of the old church a square brick building, which they crowned with a slate roof. This triumph of churchwardens' Gothic was invisible to those who approached from the fields, and a cold shiver of disappointment struck the new-comer when the sacrilege was first apparent. About four-fifths of the church was brand

new, so that the narrow slice of the original stone building was almost lost in the new temple of bricks and mortar. A gallery supported by iron props ran round the new interior, and part of this, which resembled a bow-window turned inwards, was appropriated to the organist, the organ, and the choir. The organ was a "grinder," and required no great amount of skill in the manipulator. Not that that was the opinion of the gentleman (in private life the village grocer) who did us the honour of turning the handle. To him, what some might consider a mere matter of routine, was an important ceremony partaking almost of the nature of a sacrament; the part of his religion which moved him most, and which he thought should chiefly move others. "Them sermons is all very well," he would say, "but give me my music." A gilt-lettered inscription affixed to the front of the organ-loft handed down to a grateful, or possibly pilloried for a thankless and derisive posterity the names of the two worthies who had provided this rich treat for future antiquaries.

Our pew was a large square one in the new part of the church, and approached by a flight of stone steps. For some inscrutable reason the new building was located on a higher level than the old one. The old chancel, which by some miracle had escaped intact, ran on by itself when the new part was done with, and formed a sort of cave whence the minister's voice was wont to issue with a strangely muffled sound. We in the new church had to wait for its tardy arrival round the corner (where it sometimes met with a gust of wind which blew it back again) before we could "respond." The remainder of the old part of the church was given

up to an enormous "churching-pew" (which I remember to have been in constant requisition), and the most elaborate form of "three-decker" that it has ever been my good fortune to meet with. That it was of exceptional height will be gathered from the fact that though it started from the pit of the old church, and had therefore got up to the knees, as it were, before it became visible to the occupants of the new building, it still managed to make a very respectable show. Commencing with a square box for the clerk, the edifice was continued by a large double reading-desk adapted to accommodate two parsons, the chief and his subordinate, one of whom reposed in turn in either corner. To this succeeded the pulpit, reached by quite a long flight of rather crazy-looking stairs, and placed immediately under a vast "sounding-board" which swung by a chain from a hook more or less securely fixed in the flat plaster ceiling. The thought of that sounding-board,—supposing it to have been solid (which I doubt) and to have broken away from its moorings, it would have flattened an average incumbent into a wafer—must have played sad havoc with the ideas of even the coolest clerical Damocles.

The congregation, like the church, was rather mixed. We began with a duke, then dropped down to half a score or so of admirals, and an equal number of post-captains, so called I suppose from their having no posts. Then came a military official of some sort with a red nose and collar to match, and after him the smaller fry. A little squire with a big family had a pew in the old part adjoining the chancel. We children used to peep over our boundary fence,—save at Christmas time when the sprigs of holly with which the top of it was adorned by the beadle converted it into a prickly hedge—and watch them at their devotions far below as at the bottom of a well. In the summer-time the cockney visitors used to attend for the express purpose of staring at the

duke. They would sit in rows on the steps,—the local gentry as a rule declining to admit them into their pews—with, so to speak, cocked eye-glasses ready to let off appreciative glances so soon as the great man made his appearance. Our duke was very deaf, and used politely to fix a patent arrangement in his ear when the parson took his position under the sounding-board. This done he would go quietly off to sleep. He was very good-natured, and did his best to accommodate gazers, but his capacity was (in this case only) limited. He used to wear white trousers and a spencer. A spencer was a sort of Eton jacket worn over a long coat. I have never seen any one in a spencer since, from which I conclude that their day is over. Most certainly there are no men like our duke left to wear them.

Grocers, butchers, bakers, farmers (who though not much considered were yet far from having reached the lower depth of their present degradation) occupied seats a little removed from the quality and from the naval and military departments. The sailors used to lounge in in their rough jackets, looking much too large for the church. When they stood up in their allotted portion of the gallery their heads almost touched the ceiling or upper deck, which, I suppose, suited them to a T. Somehow or other they seemed to bring in the murmur of the sea; perhaps they carried it about with them as seashells do. The bees in summer used to come humming in through the open windows, and the effect altogether on warm afternoons was decidedly drowsy. As a rule people used to slumber peacefully during the afternoon service; but to this there were the usual exceptions. It was indeed on one of these drowsy afternoons, being home from school for the holidays, that, instead of yielding to the slumbrous influences of the place and hour, I sat up very straight on my seat, having just discovered that I was in love. The object of my youthful affections was

the daughter of a little neighbouring squire whose village was without a church, and whose family therefore used frequently to attend service at ours. Miss Julia Barton was a great friend of my sisters, and it was her custom on Sunday, after assisting in the choir, to dine at our house between the services. Not that I thought she "assisted" in the choir; to me she was the choir. I used to gaze rapturously on her charming face while it remained above the horizon, and when it sank (as it used to at intervals) below the green baize curtain that embellished the front of the organ-loft, I would fix my eyes fondly on the spot where it went down, and whence it might be expected sooner or later (I always fancied it later) to emerge. I have outlived many illusions, but I still believe her to have been the most charming girl in the world. She was sweet (oh, how sweet!) seventeen, tall and fair, with the bluest of blue eyes. She wore her brown hair arranged in the broad side-plaits which were then the fashion, at least in the country. No doubt she made merry (she was always making merry) at my expense; but I did not know it, and if I had known, should not have cared. I was utterly unmindful of the wide gap between a girl of seventeen and a boy of fourteen, and saw nothing in the least absurd in my devotion.

When poets sing the delights of love they are not generally supposed to be alluding to "calf" love; yet I doubt whether that phase of the passion deserves the contempt which is so frequently all the notice bestowed on it. Possibly a poet, or a writer of prose, wearied with depicting the endless joys or sorrows of mature lovers might find a little labour spent in portraying it not unrewarded. The boyish victim feels a rapture that he is probably not destined to experience again. The sensations that crowd his young bosom are as strange as he finds them pleasing, and he has not at first any idea as to

what ails him. On future occasions the experienced youth will not be at a loss to name the weapon wherewith he has been wounded. Next time there may be, there are sure to be, selfish desires; now there is but a duty to perform, to lay the tiny offering (a poor thing, but his best) on a perhaps not totally unaccustomed shrine.

Men have long since grown to be too clever and too wise to see perfection anywhere; but Julia was perfection to me, and for several happy weeks I fluttered gaily about the candle. I escorted her from church, sat next her at dinner, and on one or two occasions was even permitted to accompany her home in the evenings. I devoutly wished ("now I am further off from Heaven than when I was a boy") that there were six Sundays in the week instead of one. But the sweeter the dream the ruder often is the waking. I shall not have written in vain if I succeed in impressing upon young ladies of seventeen that boys of fourteen are not (perhaps I should say were not) always absolutely destitute of feeling.

Our parson was neither rector, vicar, nor curate. Like his parish he was a sort of nondescript; neither fish nor fowl. Men called him a Perpetual Curate. It is now so long since I have met with any one holding that particular ecclesiastical rank that I presume that, like other and possibly better things, the Perpetual Curate has been for some reason, good or insufficient, abolished. It is passing strange that I can recall no other custom or institution however useless over whose grave some *laudator temporis acti* has not been ready to shed a tear. Why he was called *Perpetual* I have never been able to guess. The fact of the race having perished is proof sufficient that the title was a misnomer. Our Perpetual Curate was a short, common-looking, middle-aged man with a freckled face and a snub nose. His most striking personal characteristics were an inordinate appetite for snuff and a craving for

small beer, a jug of which beverage used to accompany him to his bed-room when he sought repose. It was probably not his fault that his regulation black clothes were always extremely shabby, and shone not with newness. He lived, as also had been the custom for the movable Perpetuals who had preceded him, over the baker's shop at the fishing-end of the village, no rectory, vicarage, or parsonage having been provided for his accommodation, nor is it likely that any of these words would have rightly described his professional domicile, supposing him to have had one. I had enjoyed my dream of happiness but for a few short weeks when it appeared to strike the Perpetual that the walk to and from the baker's shop between the services in hot weather was a work of supererogation. Possibly (very possibly, I think), the place was stuffy when he got there, and he may also have found it dull. There may have been moments when self-communion, even with a Perpetual Curate was scarcely a joy. Whatever the reason, he shortly became a constant guest at our early Sunday dinners. I forget whether it was on his second or third appearance that he coolly wedged himself in between me and my charmer, and engaged her with an elephantine airiness, for which I was entirely unprepared, in gay and unparochial small talk. I had an uneasy laugh or two in my sleeve at his elderly gambols; but I shall never forget my feelings when a few weeks later my mother announced (as if it was a matter in which I could have little or no interest) that Julia and the Perpetual were engaged. If I have never felt as shocked, I have certainly seldom felt as foolish as on that occasion. However there was no help for it. I went back to school in due course, and if I did not quickly recover from the blow I had at least sense enough to bow to the inevitable.

Years, long years passed before I saw the fortunate bridegroom again. In the interval I am greatly afraid that "there had been many other lodgers in my heart's most secret cell" once occupied by the divine Julia. I have no doubt that it was chiefly due to his wife's charming manners and appearance,—for a beautiful woman has in all ages been the best of all canvassers—that shortly after his marriage the Perpetual was presented to a good living in a distant part of the county. It was not long before he was actually a desired guest at the Palace, and at the houses of the local aristocracy. People are said (some people, that is) to improve with prosperity, and this may occasionally be the case. More often, no doubt, it is the way of the world to excuse, or even to admire, in prosperous people the errors and vulgarities which were noticeable, and unpleasant, in the days of their indigence. Of old nobody had seemed to think him anything out of the way save in being duller and snuffier than the majority. But to have been able to win the affections (as I suppose he did) of such a charming woman was proof positive of the possession of something, albeit invisible, above the common. I am sure I have earnestly tried to be fair.

One day I unexpectedly found myself in the neighbourhood of my ancient flame, and of course lost no time in calling. While I was talking to Julia (who looked almost as young and charming as ever) and her husband, three fine youngsters came into the room. I might have left with the impression that I had seen the whole family, but on a sudden an awful noise, as if the house was falling, was heard overhead, followed quickly by the sounds of infant weeping.

"Ah!" exclaimed the ex-Perpetual with a sigh, as his wife rushed hurriedly from the room, "there are five more up stairs."

I never forgave him that sigh.

THE LITERATURE OF THE SEA.

ONE result of England's insular position and the consequent seafaring tendencies of her population has been the constant production of literature recording the discoveries of explorers, the enterprise of merchants, and the exploits of the Royal Navy. The delightful pages of Hakluyt and Purchas are the storehouse from which historian and novelist alike have drawn their materials, and to them we must turn not only for the somewhat apocryphal accounts of the voyages of early Norman navigators, but also for narratives of the commercial enterprise of Jenkinson and the Muscovy Company, the disastrous expedition of Sir Hugh Willoughby, the slave-trading adventures of Hawkins, and the exploits of Sir Francis Drake. How great is the debt which English literature owes to Richard Hakluyt, the Student of Christ Church, is apparent at once to the reader of the pages of Lediard's work, which purports to relate the history of the Royal Navy from the earliest times until 1735, the earlier portion of which is little more than a transcript from Hakluyt's *Voyages*, while many of the most thrilling incidents and details which enchant us in "*Westward Ho!*" are derived from the same source.

Between 1600 (the date of Hakluyt's last volume) and 1735, when Lediard's work appeared, a great change had come over the conditions of English maritime activity, and the distinction between the ships employed by commercial enterprise and those in the service of the Crown had been more clearly marked, as indeed was the much needed distinction between commercial ventures and piracy. No longer was it the custom, as in the days of Elizabeth, for an English

sovereign to allow the ships of the trading community to make attacks upon the enemy, which, if unsuccessful, could at once be disavowed as unauthorised, but by which, if successful, the Crown profited as the principal shareholder in the venture. Under Cromwell, Charles the Second, and James (the latter a distinguished sailor himself), the Royal Navy had taken shape, and many of the details of the management of the fleet and the navy-yards are handed down to us in the diary bequeathed to posterity in cipher by the methodical and garrulous Pepys.

Engrossing therefore as are the accounts enshrined in Hakluyt's inimitable pages of the trading voyages and buccaneering expeditions which laid the foundation of England's maritime ascendancy, it is to Lediard's two fine volumes that we must turn for the early history of the British Navy as we now know it, and for full descriptions of the battle of Southwold Bay, commonly called Solebay, of Beachy Head and of La Hogue; of Sir George Rooke's successes at Vigo and Gibraltar, and of the many expeditions of Sir Cloudesley Shovel and Sir John Leake in connection with Lord Peterborough's operations in Spain and the relief of Barcelona.

Naval history, however, to Englishmen of the present day means the record of the exploits of our seamen during the great struggle with Napoleon; and though it is now more than a century since the first gun was fired in that mighty contest, the literature connected with it has been so copious and popular as to preserve it fresh in our remembrance, while all that precedes 1790 appears but as ancient history in comparison.

For the record of this period we

have two invaluable authorities, James and Brenton. The first was a most painstaking civilian, the second a naval officer with unusual opportunities of obtaining information; and to the rivalry of these two writers during the publication of their several volumes we are perhaps indebted for additional accuracy, although we may smile at the bitter recrimination with which each assails the occasional slips of the other. The great engagements of the fleet are recorded with much detail by these authors; but the actions of single ships which are so constantly described have a more personal interest for us nowadays, the names of the crack frigates being perpetuated in our modern cruisers, while on the walls of many an English home hang pictures of the gallant deeds of a generation which has not long since passed away.

The profession of the marine artist must have been prosperous in those days. The brushes of men like Dodd, Whitcombe, and Luny were ever at work to hand down to posterity with more or less accuracy the glorious actions of our frigates daily announced in the *London Gazette*, in which the vanquished Frenchman is always depicted, with more or less historical accuracy, as half as large again as her captor; and coloured engravings, now almost a lost art, reproduced for a wider circle such engagements as that of Sir W. Hoste in the Adriatic, and of Brenton in the *Spartan* in the Bay of Naples, while the later plates of the *Endymion* and the *President*, the *Shannon* and the *Chesapeake*, remind us that death has only just removed from us the veteran Sir Provo Wallis, who brought the *Shannon* and her prize out of action in 1813.

Great was no doubt the glory won by our seamen, but great, too, was the booty to be won. The pressgang was, it is true, required to help to man the heavier ships to which were entrusted the monotonous duties of the blockading squadrons; but the captain of a smart frigate had but little difficulty

in making up his complement, although he may not have had the good fortune, like Lord Cochrane in the *Pallas*, to return to Plymouth with a golden candlestick five feet high on each of three mastheads of his ship, as evidence of a successful cruise.

Prize-money thus won at the cannon's mouth was soon spent; much, too, was intercepted by the lawyers, and the chicanery of the Colonial Prize Courts involved many an officer in legal difficulties, which to some extent recalled the financial disasters which befell Rodney in consequence of the plunder of the treasures accumulated in the Dutch island of St. Eustatius in 1781, a veritable hoard of the Nibelungs which wrought the ruin of him who seized it.

It is not alone, however, from the pages of professed historians and the palettes of our painters that we draw our impressions of England's naval history. Other sources of information, too, are open to us, only in some degree less authentic than those already mentioned, as the genius of the novelist has preserved for us in the garb of fiction a faithful picture of life afloat during this period. How much of Captain Marryat's somewhat tumultuous and chequered career is embodied in his novels it is now difficult to ascertain, and it would perhaps be unwise to inquire too closely into this subject; but an officer who sailed with Lord Cochrane in the *Impérieuse*, and took part in many of the actions so graphically related in the "*Autobiography of a Seaman*," had a wealth of personal experience on which to draw, and could be content with the flimsiest plot in constructing his novels, so strong is the taste of salt and adventure which they leave on the palate.

Marryat's novels are indeed often little more than history in disguise. Take, for example, the escape of O'Brien and Peter Simple from the French prison, the details of which are almost literally borrowed from the published adventures of a Captain O'Brien, whose

repeated and eventually successful attempts to escape from various French fortresses in which, while yet a midshipman, he was confined as a prisoner of war, caused Napoleon to remark that the Irish *aspirants* gave him more trouble than all his other prisoners. Rough and coarse as life afloat was then, and indeed ashore too, there is a healthy tone in almost all Marryat's works; and so great has been their influence over the rising generation for many years that few grown men can look at the Blue Posts or walk along the Hard at Portsmouth without thinking of Peter Simple, or see Nix Mangiare Stairs at Malta without recalling the adventures of Easy and Gascoigne and their famous cruise in the *speronare*.

Marryat's success as a writer of naval fiction not unnaturally produced many imitators, both professional and civilian, but it is only when we read the two matchless works of his contemporary Michael Scott, in whose glowing pages are described the somewhat unchastened pleasures of the Creole planters' life in the golden days of West Indian prosperity, the horrors of the slave-trade and the adventures and sufferings of the British seamen who were engaged in suppressing the traffic, that we recognise a worthy rival to the author of "Midshipman Easy" and "Peter Simple."

Up till now, we in England have had the telling of our own story, a story which has been told in somewhat piecemeal fashion by both historian and novelist, and without much regard for the susceptibilities of other nations. As each dashing action gave inspiration to the artist, so each separate war, and even each separate cruise, found work for its own historian, who contented himself with recording the exploits and adventures then immediately under public notice, without attempting to examine the general principles by which naval warfare must always be governed, nor to point out by actual example how im-

possible is ultimate success when these principles are neglected.

Recently, however, three remarkable volumes have appeared, in which Captain Mahan, of the American Navy, the President of the United States Naval War College, has investigated the principles on which maritime supremacy has always been founded, and has recorded the successive stages in the growth of England's commercial and military ascendancy at sea.¹ Much as we may regret that this able examination of the "influence of sea-power upon history" is not the work of an English pen, we must admit that there are advantages in having our naval history subjected to the test of an examination by an impartial critic; for impartial we are bound to confess that Captain Mahan is, merciless in his strictures upon our short-comings, uncompromising in his allusions to our commercial selfishness, and unsparing in his praise of our tenacity and resource. As Captain Mahan approaches the conclusion of the great struggle with Napoleon so outspoken is his admiration of the broad lines of the policy pursued by England throughout the war, the valour of her seamen, and the skill of her commanders, that, despite certain transatlantic turns of expression and economies in spelling, we can scarcely realise that we are not reading the work of an Englishman, but the deliberate opinion of a member of a nation which, in the first decade of this century, had so recently won her independence in spite of the efforts of the Mother Country to retain her, and was again to measure her strength with England before the conclusion of the general peace.

After a preliminary chapter in which he discusses the necessary elements of sea-power and the degree in which

¹ "The Influence of Sea-Power upon History, 1660—1783," (1889) and "The Influence of Sea-Power upon the French Revolution and Empire, 1793—1812" (1892); by Captain A. T. Mahan, U.S.N., President of the United States Naval War College.

they are possessed by England, Holland, France, and the United States, Captain Mahan takes the year 1660, "when the sailing-ship era, with its distinctive features, had fairly begun," as his starting-point, and examines in succession the Anglo-Dutch war of 1665-1667, in which de Ruyter's guns were heard in London, the great combination against France of the next decade, and the struggle between Louis the Fourteenth and William the Third after his accession to the English throne, which ultimately resulted in our acquisition of Gibraltar. He points out how the practical outcome of these wars, and of that of the Spanish Succession, was that the peace of Utrecht left England "fairly placed in that position of maritime supremacy which she has so long maintained," and that Holland, "her old rival in trade and fighting, was left hopelessly behind." Captain Mahan shows that,

For the twenty-five years following the Peace of Utrecht, peace was the chief aim of the Ministers who directed the policy of the two great sea-board nations, France and England; but amidst all the fluctuations of continental politics in a most unsettled period, abounding in petty wars and shifty treaties, the eye of England was steadily fixed on the maintenance of her sea-power Under the eyes of the statesmen of Europe there was steadily and visibly being built up an overwhelming power, destined to be used as selfishly, as aggressively, though not as cruelly, and much more successfully than any that had preceded it. This was the power of the sea, whose workings, because more silent than the clash of arms, are less often noted, though lying clearly enough on the surface. It can scarcely be denied that England's uncontrolled dominion of the seas, during almost the whole period chosen for our subject, was by long odds the chief among the military factors that determined the final issue.

How this maritime supremacy of England was maintained throughout the War of the Austrian Succession, and the Seven Years' War to which we owe the expulsion of the French

from Canada, is well brought out by Captain Mahan, who has succeeded in this great treatise on sea-power in producing an admirably clear and readable history of the eighteenth century, and that not only from a "drum and trumpet" point of view. The various operations in the East Indies, which finally disposed of the French claim to interfere with the growth of our Indian Empire, are treated in separate chapters. But for us the most interesting portion of this volume are those chapters in which is related the long struggle with the Colonies which the mismanagement of our Ministers had alienated from the Mother Country, a struggle which, despite the genius of Rodney and Hood, could have but one result so soon as the weight of the combined French and Spanish fleets was thrown into the balance against England, the command of the Channel being thus constantly endangered and once at least in the hands of a fleet so powerful as to drive into port the few English ships which were left to protect our shores.

The first of the two later volumes which Captain Mahan has devoted to the history of "*The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire*" opens with a valuable introductory chapter, containing the following passage referring to the struggle with the revolted Colonies and to the Peace of Versailles:

To the citizen of the United States, the war whose results were summed up and sealed in the Treaty of Versailles, is a landmark of history surpassing all others in interest and importance. His sympathies are stirred by the sufferings of the many, his pride animated by the noble constancy of the few whose names will be for ever identified with the birth-throes of his country. Yet in a less degree this feeling may well be shared by a native of Western Europe, though he have not the same vivid impression of the strife, which, in so distant a land, and on so small a scale, brought a new nation to life. This, indeed, was the great outcome of that

war, but in its progress, Europe, India, and the sea had been the scenes of deeds of arms far more dazzling and at times much nearer home than the obscure contest in America. In dramatic effect nothing has exceeded the three years' siege of Gibraltar, teeming as it did with exciting interest, fluctuating hopes and fears, triumphant expectation and bitter disappointment. England from her shores saw gathered in the Channel sixty-six French and Spanish ships-of-the-line, a force larger than had ever threatened her since the days of the Great Armada, and before which the inferior numbers had to fly, for the first time, to the shelter of her ports. Rodney and Suffren had conducted sea-campaigns, fought sea-fights, and won sea-victories, which stirred beyond the common the hearts of men in their day, and which still stand conspicuous in the story of either navy. In one respect above all, this war was distinguished in the development on both sides of naval power. Never since the days of de Ruyter and Tourville had so close a balance of strength been seen upon the seas. Never since the Peace of Versailles, to our own day, has there been such an approach to equality between the parties to a sea-war.

It is to this virtual equality of sea-power that Captain Mahan attributes England's failure in the war of 1778; and in the two volumes devoted to the history of the great struggle with Napoleon, he points out that for a maritime and commercial nation equality of sea-power is not sufficient, and that success is only to be secured by an overwhelming preponderance of force. It was to this superiority that England owed the ascendancy secured in former wars; and when the opposing fleets became equal to hers, she was unable to maintain that absolute command of the sea which was essential to the success of her undertakings. The ten years, however, which elapsed between the Peace of Versailles and the outbreak of the war of the French Revolution, saw a great advance in England's relative superiority at sea, both commercial and military. Captain Mahan draws an interesting comparison between the maritime resources of France and England at this period, and shows how

the spirit of anarchy had sapped the discipline of the navy of France; how magnificent ships lay idle in her ports because the crews refused to obey orders; how when they went to sea it became evident that seamanship was not to be learned at anchor in the harbours of Brest and Toulon, and that unpractised gunners were no efficient substitute for the well-trained corps which had been sacrificed to the insane jealousy of the revolutionary demagogues. The English ships, on the other hand, though not in themselves superior to the French, were manned by crews hardened by constant exposure to stormy seas, commanded by officers in whom the seamen had implicit confidence, and led by admirals accustomed to the handling of fleets.

There was yet another great and all-important difference. The British seaman sought his enemy wherever he could find him, came to close quarters as soon as possible, and, whether in a fleet or a single ship, endeavoured to destroy him at all hazards; whereas the Frenchman, as a rule, seems to have fought only when he could not get away, his usual object being merely, even when in force, to create a diversion, and merely to "engage" his enemy in order to enable some one else to do something wonderful at some other point. Captain Mahan shows us that this constant tradition, for such it had come to be, of sacrificing present opportunities for the sake of "ulterior objects" was the ruin of the French navy; and that, when once the somewhat cautious tactics of Lord Howe had been superseded by the ceaseless vigilance of the blockading squadrons of St. Vincent and Nelson, the inevitable result was that the well-trained crews, in the "crazy ships" which had endured the winter storms of the Bay of Biscay and the Mediterranean, were able to combine and crush the enemy whenever he gave them a chance of coming to close action.

It is not for us here to examine

the strategy and tactics of the naval operations during the great war, a duty which may well be left to professional critics; but we would call attention to the fact that Captain Mahan has for the first time made clear to the unprofessional reader how much the plans of Napoleon were influenced by the successes of the British squadrons and the consequent failure of his "Continental System;" and we cannot refrain from transcribing the following powerful passage in which he traces the connection between the movements of the British fleet and the destinies of the Grand Army,—a passage which would of itself confer distinction on a work of far less conspicuous merit than Captain Mahan's.

Meanwhile, that period of waiting from May 1803 to August 1805, when the tangled net of naval and military movements began to unravel, was a striking and wonderful pause in the world's history. On the heights above Boulogne, and along the narrow strip of beach from Etaples to Vimereux, were encamped 130,000 of the most brilliant soldiery of all time, the soldiers who had fought in Germany, Italy, and Egypt, soldiers who were yet to win from Austria, Ulm and Austerlitz, and from Prussia, Auerstadt and Jena, to hold their own, though barely, at Eylau against the army of Russia, and to overthrow it also, a few months later, on the bloody field of Friedland. Growing daily more vigorous in the bracing sea air and the hardy life laid out for them, they could on fine days, as they practised the varied manœuvres which were to perfect the vast host in embarking and disembarking with order and rapidity, see the white cliffs fringing the only country that to the last defied their arms. Far away, Cornwallis off Brest, Collingwood off Rochefort, Pellew off Ferrol, were battling with the wild gales of the Bay of Biscay, in that tremendous and sustained vigilance which reached its utmost tension in the years preceding Trafalgar, concerning which Collingwood wrote that admirals need to be made of iron, but which was forced upon them by the unquestionable and imminent danger of the country. Farther distant still, severed apparently from all connexions with the busy scene at Boulogne, Nelson before Toulon was

wearing away the last two years of his glorious but suffering life, fighting the fierce north-westerns of the Gulf of Lyons and questioning, questioning continually with feverish anxiety, whether Napoleon's object was Egypt again or Great Britain really. They were dull, weary, eventless months, these months of watching and waiting of the big ships before the French arsenals. Purposeless they surely seemed to many, but they saved England. The world has never seen a more impressive demonstration of the influence of sea-power upon its history. Those far-distant, storm-beaten ships, upon which the Grand Army never looked, stood between it and the dominion of the world. Holding the interior positions they did, before,—and therefore between—the chief dockyards and detachments of the French navy, the latter could unite only by a concurrence of successful evasions, of which the failure of any one nullified the result. Linked together as the various British fleets were by chains of smaller vessels, chance alone could secure Bonaparte's great combination, which depended upon the covert concentration of several detachments upon the point practically within the enemy's lines. Thus, while bodily present before Brest, Rochefort, and Toulon, strategically the British squadrons lay in the Straits of Dover barring the way against the army of invasion.

From this point the maritime operations of France degenerated into a more or less successful system of preying upon the commerce of her enemy, a system hereditary in the descendants of Jean Bart and Dougay Trouin. But the writer makes it clear that there is no instance in history of such a *guerre de course* having any real influence on the ultimate issue of a war, annoying and destructive as it may be to the commerce of the stronger power; and here we see that this work is written with a moral, as they say of the story books, and that one of the author's objects is to convince his countrymen of the folly of expecting to create any sort of a navy in the absence of a mercantile marine, and of the futility in these days of steam of relying upon destroying commerce as a principle of warfare in the absence of well-protected coaling-stations and lines of

communication. A striking passage with reference to the war of 1812 may be quoted as summarising his opinion on this subject.

Every one knows how our [American] privateers swarmed over the seas, and from the smallness of our navy the war was essentially, indeed solely, a cruising war. Except upon the lakes, it is doubtful if more than two of our ships at any time acted together. The injury done to English commerce, thus unexpectedly attacked by a distant foe which had been undervalued, may be fully conceded; but on the one hand, the American cruisers were powerfully supported by the French fleet, which being assembled in larger or smaller bodies in the many ports under the Emperor's control from Antwerp to Venice, tied the fleets of England to blockade duty; and on the other hand, when the fall of the Emperor released them, our coasts were insulted in every direction, the Chesapeake entered and controlled, its shores wasted, the Potomac ascended, and Washington burned. The northern frontier was kept in a state of alarm, though these squadrons, absolutely weak but relatively strong, sustained the general defence; while in the south the

Mississippi was entered unopposed and New Orleans barely saved. When negotiations for peace were opened, the bearing of the English towards the American envoys was not that of men who felt their country to be threatened with an unbearable evil.

To Englishmen especially this work cannot but be deeply interesting, as giving a detailed account of the gradual process by which our commercial marine was fostered, trade protected and increased, and the necessary halting-places and fortresses on each trade-land secured. Yet, while we note that the descendant of the "neutral trader" cannot but approve, as a matter of policy, of our ruthless application of the Right of Search and the Orders in Council which followed the Berlin Decrees, we await with some anxiety Captain Mahan's fourth volume, in which he promises to deal with the war of 1812, and the resistance which the United States offered to the somewhat insolent maritime supremacy of Great Britain.

OLD-FASHIONED CHILDREN.

THUS they style them, the simple-minded folk who can think of no better term by which to describe those spiritual children whom we meet with now and then to our great refreshment and comfort in this world, who seem to have already as it were the name of God written on their foreheads. "He wur allus a old-fashioned little chap," says the poor father of humble calling, and draws his rough sleeve across his eyes when you condole with him on the sorest affliction the soul of man is capable of sustaining, that which for its severity was chosen as the climax of ten terrible plagues to subdue the will of a stiff-necked tyrant,—the death of a first-born son. They do so often die, these old-fashioned children, in real life as in fiction. Although they may be sturdy of limb and apparently of sound constitution, and though they take so kindly and comprehensive an interest in every living thing and every circumstance of their brief life on earth, yet there is somewhat in them which is not of this world, and generally they spend but a short time in it, being, we can but conjecture, required elsewhere. And who, apart from natural grief, can regret them? Who, had he the power, dare call one of them back? "For what," asks Phillips Brooks, in a passage which gives the whole gist of the otherwise inscrutable matter, "what is it when a child dies? It is the great Head-Master calling him into His own room to finish his education at His own feet. The whole thought of a child's development in heaven instead of earth is one of the most exalting on which the mind can rest. Always there must be something in those who died as children to make them different to all eternity from those who grew up to

be men here among all the temptations and hindrances of earth."

Let us glance at the old-fashioned children whom we meet in the world of fiction; for what children (other than our very own) with whom we hold converse in actual life are half so real as these? There they are, a whole family of them,—David Copperfield, Paul Dombey, Little Nell, Alice in Wonderland, dear Jackanapes, little Lord Fauntleroy, and all their brothers and sisters.

Shakespeare deals not with children, old-fashioned or otherwise; he has over-much to do with men and women, and few under adult age appear on his immortal page. When he does have occasion to introduce one, he draws him in a few vigorous lines, and you have a real child before you. There is in all his works no more tenderly drawn character than the ill-starred hapless Arthur, lovable as loving; but Arthur is a boy, not a child. The most genuine child of his I can recall is the little prince Mamillius in "The Winter's Tale." A "sweet villain" this, as his sire calls him; somewhat precocious in his dalliance with his royal mother's waiting-women, yet withal a sturdy brat, with his smutched nose and charming impudence. But, "go play, Mamillius, thou art (or shalt be) an honest man," but thou art not one of my old-fashioned children.

The old-fashioned child is in fact a development of modern writers, and to Dickens for his delineation of this, as of many other phases of human character, the palm must be given. It is he indeed who has supplied us with the phrase; for this is what they all, Dr. Blimber and his erudite daughter, the not too sympathetic Mrs. Pipchin, the thoroughly sympa-

thetic Florence, Toots, the footman, and I may even add, the dog Diogenes, considered him to be,—old-fashioned. There was no other term for him, and the spontaneous, almost unconscious, tenderness with which every one regarded him and his old fashions is the most touching tribute to the semi-divine nature of this dear child. A later generation may perhaps be hardly able to realise the intense and sympathetic interest with which this spiritual conception was received. As a testimony to the vivid reality of little Paul I will venture to cite a personal instance. It was told me by an old friend of my own mother that, when as a bride she was beguiling the tedium of her husband's absence by reading the story, then being published in monthly parts, at the sound of wheels she ran out into the hall, exclaiming with tears in her eyes and grief as for a real child in her voice, "Oh, William, have you heard? Little Paul Dombey is dead!"

Possibly therefore my extreme reverence for this character, unshaken as it remains after the onslaughts of a certain school of modern criticism ever on the alert to detect false pathos and pre-disposed to disparage even genuine enthusiasm, may be in a manner hereditary. Be this as it may, recent criticism notwithstanding, I at least can discern nothing theatrical in the presentment of this sweet child, living or dying. "Tell them the print upon the stairs at school is not divine enough," may, as has been suggested, savour too much of art criticism. Yet who shall say what such children may not see as they draw near to the everlasting arms which from their birth seem ready to embrace them? Who, at least, will maintain that the golden water dancing on the wall or the sound of the great river rolling ever seawards, is not in the highest degree compatible with an imaginative child's fancy?

There is a glamour as it were of melancholy over all these children of Dickens. They are not morbid; they are

genuine and lifelike; yet to the reader of average sensibility they occasion pain as well as pleasure by reason of the intense sympathy which they evoke, a reflection of that spontaneous sympathy with all forms of human suffering and decay which was so marked a characteristic of the author. This is particularly the case with little Nell, with *Oliver Twist*, and with *David Copperfield*. David especially, who as representing Dickens's own unhappy childhood, may be taken as the prototype of all his old-fashioned children, stands out a little human reality, precocious indeed in tribulation, and in that reflective philosophy which is the offspring of tribulation in a generous heart, whether of child or man; yet not, I submit, preternaturally so. Some of us have seen in the flesh such children, of quick ingenuous spirit, rendered old, or rather old-fashioned, by premature sorrow, the loss for instance of the one who loved and understood, and consequent deprivation of that sympathy which is to such children as the breath of life. Driven in upon itself the child's mind becomes, as I have said, not necessarily morbid, but introspective and reflective beyond its years, thus inducing that gravity of mien which, combined with natural sweetness of disposition, and brightened by the sense of humour such children almost invariably possess, makes up that delightful attribute which we, for lack of a more adequate term, have learned to call old-fashionedness. Both David and Oliver, as well as Paul Dombey, were essentially old-fashioned children.

And little Nell,—what is to be said of her? I must confess that, amiable and devoted as she is, Nell appears to me somewhat less spontaneous than the others. Many possibly hold a different opinion, and will traverse this judgment; but to me the character seems a little overstrained, and therefore less taking than the other children of Dickens's exquisite fancy. The book in which Little Nell is enshrined is a capital one, and peren-

nially interesting; but the chapters of it which in my maturer years please me most are, I must own, those which have least to do with Little Nell and her grandfather. Mrs. Jarley and her man George, briefly as they are described, are, to avail one's self of a term generally expressive of their author, inimitable; the amiable simplicity of the unsophisticated Garland family is a perpetual refreshment; the demoniac humours of Quilp, the sublime self-complacency and equally sublime chivalry of that choice spirit Mr. Richard Swiveller, are matters which never pall; but the long, long gush of Little Nell's relations to her troublesome old grandparent sometimes does. I do not deny the pathos of it all; but I think the pathos is at times elaborated into wearisomeness. It amounts to this, that while exaggeration not unfrequently enhances and gives point to comedy, it is apt in tragedy to defeat its own end. Nevertheless we could ill have spared little Nell; for there is in her, as in all her creator's characters, much reality; so much that never can I revisit the beautiful old church of Tong, in Shropshire (from which the village where her waning days were spent is said to have been drawn), without some vision of the fair but fading girl haunting its mossy tombs or the time-worn effigies within its hoary walls.

But most pathetic to me (I know not why) has always been the departure from this "star of suffering" of Baby Johnny in "Our Mutual Friend." Is there not something infinitely touching in that little scene in the children's ward of the hospital, when, having made his last will and testament, leaving his toys (his horse, his Noah's ark, his yellow bird, and man in the Guards) to his tiny fellow-sufferer in the next cot, not forgetting a kiss for the "boofer lady," Johnny, having bequeathed all he had to dispose of and arranged his affairs in this world, left it?

That Dickens rather over-did these children's deathbeds, and thereby set

a mischievous example which has been all too abundantly followed, and that had he given us but one (say little Paul's, which was essential to the scheme of the story) it would have been the more impressive, is hardly to be gainsaid. Nevertheless it must be admitted that in suffering so many of them to die he was at least true to fact, since we must all have observed that a majority of these old-fashioned children do not survive their infancy. Why this should be, when they are often of normal health and constitution, is not to be explained, unless upon the hypothesis contained in the before-quoted passage of Phillips Brooks.

Thackeray, though I do not recall that he gives us anywhere an old-fashioned child of the type I am attempting to describe, yet supplies us with a genuine brat or two. Notably in his famous *Becky's* little neglected son. We begin actually to like the graceless Rawdon when we note his fondness for his boy; and quite the prettiest picture in that absorbing book is where, meeting in the park the little George Osborne, whose father the gambling soldier had plundered and despised, he sets him behind his own son on the pony, and the Colonel, the Corporal, and old Mr. Sedley with his umbrella, three incongruous persons united by this common bond of sympathy, walk by the children's side.

Descending from the classics we come now to some old-fashioned children of later birth,—our small friends Jackanapes, little Lord Fauntleroy, and Alice in Wonderland. Jackanapes is a genuine boy of the most lovable type, and the sweet and tender story of which he is the central figure is one which will delight generations of readers. Fauntleroy, too, is a child full of grace and beauty, who with all his goodness never lapses into that terrible monstrosity, the juvenile prig. The earlier part of the story, recounting his adventures in the land of his exile, is perhaps the stronger. His friendship with the American

storekeeper, the shoeblack, and the old apple-woman, are not merely entertaining, but absolutely true to life; for it is ever a characteristic of the old-fashioned child to establish sympathies with the most dissimilar and improbable persons. The beneficial influence which the child exerts, when he comes to England, upon his ill-tempered and arrogant old grandfather is also artistic; though perhaps his intense interest in an oppressed tenantry, with whom he can have had no personal acquaintance, is a little too philanthropic for so young a child, and apt to induce a comparison with the supernaturally angelic Eva in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Among numberless portraits of the same kind little Lord Fauntleroy stands out as an ideal of childhood, and an example of a nature so intrinsically sweet and noble that it cannot be spoiled by indulgence, or daunted by difficulty.

And Alice, dear Alice,—“child of the pure unclouded brow, and dreaming eyes of wonder!”—surely the charm of that wonderful book consists in the delightful personality of the child herself more even than in the irresistible drollery of her adventures. Knowing too from whom Alice was drawn, and the idyllic circumstances of the story's origin, what memories it must ever recall to many of us! How it bears us back to the classic banks of the Isis,—to the meadows of Christchurch and Merton, with the chequered shadows of the limes falling on the Broad Walk; to the tall gates over which we perilously climbed when returning belated from the boats; to the river-side, and the gay colours of the crews as on some balmy evening in May the long string of racing-boats dropped down with rhythmic cadence to the start for that desperate struggle from Iffley Lasher to Folly Bridge, when hopes were high and young hearts strong; or again to long hours in cushioned punts on the winding Cherwell, with the city of the dreaming spires at one's back, and the scent of new-dried hay wafted

on the fragrant air. All that is long ago, but,—

Still she haunts me phantom-wise,
Alice moving under skies
Never seen by waking eyes.

Ever drifting down the stream,
Lingering in the golden gleam,
Life, what is it but a dream?

A dream? Ay,—yet in it the dream-children come to us and bear a message from above, as in De Quincey's beautiful vision when he was in church on a heavenly Sunday morn, where in the great east window the golden sunlight of God slept among the heads of His apostles and martyrs and saints, and where the lawny beds went up to scale the heavens, and shadowy arms moved downwards to meet them. He tells how then his soul was moved by the anthem, which seems to have been the Hallelujah Chorus, and in what a passage he describes it! “The storm, the trampling movement of the choral passion, the agitation of my own trembling sympathy, the tumult of the choir, the wrath of the organ. Once more I, that wallowed in the dust, became he that rose up to the clouds. And now all was bound into unity; the first state and the last were melted into each other as in some sunny glorifying haze. For high in heaven hovered a gleaming host of faces, veiled with wings around the pillows of the dying children. And such beings sympathise equally with sorrow that grovels and with sorrow that soars!” Merely the fantastic ravings of the opium-eater, our omniscient friend the modern materialistic critic assures us; otherwise it might sound to us as the ecstasy of one to whom had been revealed as in a vision the divinely-proclaimed fact, that in heaven the angels do always behold the eternal Father's face.

The possession in actual life of one of these old-fashioned children, though perhaps the highest privilege that can be accorded to man on earth, is by no means an unqualified blessing. The affection which such a child inspires

is apt to become a pain from its very intensity. Sweet as is the communion between your child and you, the pleasure of that communion is always chastened by the awful dread lest the heaven-born spirit should wear through its fragile sheath before the latter shall have had time to become tempered to this trying existence. To have such a child and to lose him, even though it be but temporarily, is a trial from which the most steadfast soul may well crave to be spared. While he is yours you realise to the full what the Psalmist meant by one's being not ashamed when one met one's enemies in the gate; when he is gone from you, you can but turn your face in sorrow to the wall; the joy of life is past, and henceforth, however kindly Fortune may treat you, her kindness seems but a mockery, since he can no longer share in the prosperity which you would have desired chiefly for his sake.

The companionship of such a child is indeed delightful. The animation of his converse, the sympathetic interest which he takes in all your concerns, the generousness of his views, the *naïveté* of his remarks, the humour of which, as I have said, such children are not unfrequently capable, combine to render him the most charming of comrades, the truest of friends. The only way in which he is likely to trouble you will be with his questions, which are interminable. He will ask you forty in a minute, some possibly involving problems of the first magnitude, of which nevertheless he expects an immediate and satisfactory solution, his respect for your superior wisdom being occasionally as embarrassing as it is flattering.

But if we cannot say altogether with the poet that in the presence of the children, "the questions that perplexed us have vanished quite away," otherwise we are wholly with him; for what indeed are our contrivings for wealth, position, fame, what all our lore of earthly wisdom, compared with

the loving clasp of little warm white arms about our neck, the pressure of rosy lips, the rustling of soft curls against our brow, and the whisper as of the breath of heaven in our ears?

Ye are better than all the ballads
That ever were sung or said;
For ye are living poems,
And all the rest are dead.

Moreover such children are themselves invariably endowed with the poetic faculty. We do not of course mean the faculty of composing poetry, but the faculty of feeling it. The one is of art, the other of nature. A poet our old-fashioned child is born, and though in mature age he write never a line, or fashion never a verse, a poet he will remain to the end of the chapter. Tennyson recognised this fact when he addressed his little grandson and namesake as "Glorious poet who never hast written a line." And who cannot supply some instance of this appreciative faculty from his own observation? "All white, with lots of storm in it," was a little child's graphic description of the sea at Bournemouth which he had seen in the fury of a south-westerly gale. "The trees, daddy, the trees!" exclaimed one yet younger, lying in his father's arms as they drove beneath lofty elms by night. Baby though he was, but lately endued with the power of articulate speech, he could evidently perceive the majesty of the deep masses of foliage tossing dimly against the darkening sky; and his infant soul was stirred by the solemn diapason which thrilled with mystic murmurings through their waving shapes. Ah that boy! never have I beheld in the flesh so perfect a specimen of my old-fashioned child,—tall, straight as a lance, fine of limb, and clear-eyed as a young deer, with the smile of a seraph, and a voice like a lute. What a man he would have made had he not been called, while yet a little child, to a higher than human sphere!

Yet who can say how such a child, though the heir of generations of

culture, and fenced about from infancy with every social safeguard, will grow up; or to what extent the trials and temptations of the world may not mar the original creation, "only a little lower than the angels"? It is indeed for the children that we feel most keenly the curse of sin and shame upon this world of ours. How sad a thing it seems that they with all their bright and holy innocence, all their capacity for happiness and enjoyment, should ever taste of sorrow! Yet we know that in their turn they must, even as we in our time have all drunk of that bitter cup.

Our old-fashioned child too is peculiarly susceptible to all those influences which make for sorrow in the human heart. "He who has most of heart," says an old writer, "knows most of sorrow;" and being all heart, so to speak, the child feels most deeply both his own troubles and those of the world at large. Aware of the refining influence of sorrow upon the noble mind, we do not presume to deprecate the stern discipline of life in their maturer years; but we do most wrathfully resent the tyranny so often practised upon helpless children. Nothing among all the imbecilities and wickednesses of perverted humanity kindles our ire so swiftly as this; nothing gratifies us more than the prompt punishment of the offender. We clap vigorously when the exasperated usher falls upon the brutal Squeers, while we would with joy ourselves have taken a turn at Mr. Murdstone in an eighteen-foot ring; for was not he, the wretch, an oppressor of one of our old-fashioned children? Nor have there been wanting, alas! in real life, and in recent years, instances of the most horrible and systematic cruelties inflicted upon children of tender age. To defend these from outside molestation is simply a matter of police; but who is to protect them from their protectors, their legal tyrants, in the privacy of their terrible homes? The pathos of the deaths of Dickens's children is as nothing to the

pathos of those children's lives; while the things we read of almost daily in connection with the little ones of this actual world cause us to wonder how their guardian angels contrive to stay their hands.

The joys and sorrows of childhood, like its grace and innocence, may be but for a day, yet how desirable that that day should be as happy as we who have the care of them can make it! An act of cruelty or injustice perpetrated upon an innocent child leaves a mark upon the sensitive loving soul which time cannot efface. Therefore look to it, parents and guardians of young children, that the dew of morning be not brushed off the tender blossom by any rough unsympathetic handling of yours. The noon-tide sun when it ascends on the fulness of manhood will scorch it up; but anticipate not the noon-tide at dawn.

And what so ephemeral as the children themselves? Should you in heaven's mercy escape participation in the last and direst of Egypt's plagues, and your children be spared you; they do so soon grow up, they are your little ones for so short a space.

How the children leave us, and no traces

Linger of the smiling angel band;

Gone, for ever gone, and in their places

Wearied men and anxious women stand.

Yet who would have been without the friendship of one of these little ones even though but the memory of it now remain? Surely it must soften, and in a manner purify the soul for the rest of time. How many a human character must have been chastened and elevated by the possession of such a child as I have here attempted to portray; while, on the other hand, from how many a virile mind has a certain grace been missing through lack of some such refining influence? Jean Jacques Rousseau, there is much in your famous *Confessions* which disgusts; but there is nothing which more disgusts than the mawkish sentimentality

with which, under the guise of reason, you seek to justify the baseness of your conduct in sending your third child, "as well as the two former," to the Foundling Hospital. Had you kept them by you, and used your undoubted talents in working for their maintenance, you might perchance have gone down to posterity with a very different character from that of the prurient egotist you must be for ever considered.

Parents (with some few abominable exceptions) are not nowadays so callous as was this pseudo-philosopher; yet few perhaps have any sufficient sense of their moral and social obligations, or realise that their offspring are of greater importance than themselves. Yet such must be the case, since the character which remains to be formed is obviously of greater import and significance to society than that which, for good or ill, is already developed. Each generation should be in fact an advance upon the preceding one; and such parents as can leave children to

succeed them who shall be morally, mentally, and physically superior to themselves, have proved themselves benefactors to society, and may depart when their time comes in the comfortable assurance that they have not lived in vain. Self-indulgent and egotistical parents may be disposed to resist such a doctrine; the wise will accept it, for it is, as George Eliot has justly observed, "the proper order of things, the order of Nature, which treats all maturity as a mere *nidus* for youth."

And do you especially, O reader, unto whom is given the honour of being the parent of an old-fashioned child, accept that charge with joy, yet, for it is a sacred one, with fear and trembling. Should your child live, well; your own life will not have been entirely a fruitless one, since you were his progenitor. Should he die, again well; you will have entertained an angel, I will hope, not unawares.

FREDERIC ADYE.

MISS STUART'S LEGACY.¹

BY MRS. STEEL.

CHAPTER XX.

AFZUL KHÂN was sitting in Shunker Dâs's house at Faizapore with a frown upon his face. He had come all the way in order to consult Mahomed Lateef, the old Syyed, about a certain blue envelope which was hidden away in his skin-coat, only to find that the old man had retreated before his enemies to his last foothold of land, while the usurer had enlarged his borders at the expense of the old chief's ruined house.

Now Mahomed Lateef was Afzul Khân's patron. It came about in this way. The latter was foster-brother to that dead son who had died gloriously in the regiment, and who had been born at an outpost on the frontier; indeed, but for that old man, Afzul would never have put the yoke of service round his neck. So his frown was not only on account of his useless journey; much of it was anger at his old friend's misfortunes, and those who had taken advantage of them. It angered him to see a blue monkey painted on the wall in front of which the stanch Mahommedan used to say his prayers; it angered him still more to see the rows of cooking-pots where there used to be but one. Yet business was business, and Shunker might be able to tell him what had become of the Commissariat-Colonel-sahib's daughter; for Afzul had had the address of the letter spelt out for him by a self-satisfied little schoolboy at Kohât, and knew enough of poor Dick's family history to suppose that Belle Stuart must be his cousin.

"Estuart-sahib's daughter," echoed

Shunker, a sullen scowl settling on his face, as it always did at the memory of his wrongs. "Why she married that *shaitan* Raby who lives at Saundaghur now, because he was turned out of the service. *Wah!* a fine pair, and a fine tale. She had a lover, Marsden of a Sikh regiment, who paid for her with lakhs on lakhs. Then, when he was killed, she took the money and married Raby. Scum! and they talk about our women; bah!"

This was not all malice and uncharitableness on the usurer's part; for it must be remembered that, if we know very little of Indian social life, the natives know still less of ours, the result being, on both sides, the explanation of strange phenomena by our own familiar experience; and this is not, as a rule, a safe guide in conditions of which we know nothing.

Afzul gave a guttural snort, startling but expressive. "She married Raby! Truly it is said 'The journeyings of fools are best not made.' And Marsden-sahib,—long life to him!—was her lover! *Inshallah!* she might have found a worse."

"Before the worms got him," chuckled Shunker; "and then his money was worth another fine man. That is woman's way, white or black."

"Raby-sahib's *mem*," repeated Afzul meditatively. "There thou speakest truth, O Shunker. He is with her now." The memory of those two standing together hand in hand came to him and he nodded his head approvingly, for the thought that Belle's allegiance might return to its original object commended itself to his mind,

¹ Copyright 1893, by Macmillan and Co.

his view of the subject not being occidental.

"Who is with her now?" asked Shunker with a stare.

"Marsden-*sahib*. Hast not heard he hath come back to life?"

The usurer's eyes almost started from his head. "Come back!" he shrieked. "He is not dead! Oh holy Lukshmi, what offerings to thy shrine! Why, the *shaitan* will lose the money; he will have to give up the business; and I—oh Gunesh-*ji*! I am revenged, I am revenged!" He lay back on his bed gasping, gurgling, choking with spiteful laughter and real passionate delight.

The Pathan scowled. His knowledge of English law was limited, and he objected to laughter at Marsden-*sahib's* expense. "If he gave it to the *mem* for what he got, as thou sayest, Shunker, Marsden-*sahib* will never ask it back. He will take the woman instead; that is but fair."

"Thou dost not understand their crooked ways," gasped Shunker; "and 'tis waste of time to explain. So Marsden-*sahib* is alive again; that is news indeed. *Hurri Gunga*! I must go down to Saudaghur and felicitate the *shaitan* on his friend's return. He, he, on his friend's return!"

Afzul felt the longing of the frontiersman to stick a knife in a fat Hindu stomach, but he refrained. The blue envelope was going to be a heavier responsibility than he had thought for, and till that was settled he must not wander into by-ways. No matter how the pig-faced idolater had lied in other things, it was true about the *mem* and the Major; Afzul had seen that with his own eyes. Had Dick-*sahib* been her lover too? And what did both those brave ones see in such a poor, thin creature? Truly the ways of the *sahib-logue* were past finding out. Nevertheless he would seek out the old Khân, and see what he said. Shunker might be lying; all except that about the *mem-sahib* and the Major; that was true.

It was well on to noon when Afzul,

after many hours of varied travelling, by train, by canal, and finally on foot, found himself in Mahomed Lateef's last few acres of land. Of a surety they were not ones to be voluntarily chosen as a resting-place; bare of everything save the sparse stalks of last year's millet crop, showing all too clearly how scanty that crop had been; bare to the very walls of the half-ruined tower which stood supported on one side by the mud hovel occupied by the owner. A significant fact that bareness, showing the lack of flocks and herds, the lack of everything that was not wanted for immediate use. And as he stood at the open door of the yard, it also showed clean-swept and garnished, dire sign of the poverty which allows nothing to go to waste. Yet it was not empty of all, for as the Pathan knocked again, a child, bubbling over with laughter, ran from a dark door into the sunlight.

"Nâna, Nâna [grand-dad], catch, catch!" it cried, and its little legs, unsteady though they were, kept their advantage on the long ones behind, long but old, crippled too with rheumatism and want of food to keep the stern old heart in fighting order; yet bubbling over with laughter, also, was the stern old face. "Catch thee, gazelle of the desert! fleetest son of Byramghor! Who could catch thee? Ah, God and his Prophet! thou hast not hurt thyself, little heart of my heart! What, no tears? Fâtma, Fâtma! the boy hath fallen, and on my life he hath not shed a tear. *Âi*, the bold heart! *ai*, the brave man!"

An old woman, bent almost double with age, crept from the door. She kissed the child's feet as it sat throned in its grandfather's arms. Her lips could reach no higher, but that was high enough for worship. "He never cries! None of them cried, and he is like them all," she crooned. "Dost have a mind, Khân-*sahib*, of Futteh Mahomed falling?—the first, and I so frightened. There was a scratch a finger long on his knee and——"

"Peace, Fâtma, and go back! There

is a stranger at the door. Go back, I say!"

It was a difficult task to draw the veil over those bent shoulders, but the old woman's wrinkled hands did their best as she scurried away obediently.

"*Salaam Alaikoom!*" said the Pathan. "The mother may return. It is I, Afzul, brother of the breast."

"Afzul!" The old martinet's face grew dark. "The only Afzul I knew was a runaway and a deserter. Art thou he?"

"Ay! *Khân-sahib*," replied the man calmly. "I ran away because I had sold my life to Marsden-*sahib*, and I wanted to buy it back again. I have done it, and I am free."

"Marsden-*sahib*! 'Tis long since I heard that name. Allah be with the brave! Pity there was none to stand between him and death as on that day when my son died."

"Thou liest, *Khân-sahib*. I stood in my brother's place. Marsden-*sahib* is not dead. I left him three days gone at Saudaghur."

"Not dead? This is a tale! A prisoner no doubt. *Inshallah!* my blood scents something worth words. Here, *Fâtma*, take the child; or, stay, 'tis best he should hear too. Such things sink through the skin and strengthen the heart. And bring food, woman, what thou hast, and no excuses. A brave man stomachs all save insult."

So, with the child on his knee, the old soldier listened to Afzul *Khân's* story, while in the dark room beyond the women positively shed tears of shame over the poor appearance which the plain *bajra*¹ cakes, unsweetened, unbuttered, presented on the big brass platter.

"There is the boy's curdled milk," suggested his sad-faced mother. "He will not mind for a day."

"Peace, unnatural!" scolded the grandmother. "The boy's milk, forsooth! What next? Women nowadays have no heart. A strange man, and the boy's milk forsooth!"

¹ Small millet; the food of the poorest.

Haiyât-bibi blushed under her brown skin. Hers was a hard life with her husband far over the black water, and this stern old man and woman for gaolers. But the boy was hers; she hugged that knowledge to her heart and it comforted her.

The evening drew in, the child dozed off to sleep, but not one jot or tittle of adventure was to be passed over in silence. "*Inshallah!* but thou didst well!" "God send the traitors to hell!" "Ay! Marsden-*sahib* was ever the bravest of the brave!" These and many another exclamation testified to the old campaigner's keen interest. But when Afzul began tentatively to question him about the blue envelope the light died from the hollow eyes. Raby-*sahib*? Nay, he knew nought save that the people said it was the *mem-sahib's* money he was spending in this new talk of indigo and what not. He wished them no ill, but Murghub Ahmad, far away in the Andamans, had saved the *mem* from insult,—perhaps worse—and she had given evidence against him in the trial. He wished no man ill, but if what the people said was true, and Raby-*sahib's* new dam would prevent the river from doing its duty, then it would be a different matter. Ay! the new factory was but ten miles up the river, but no one lived there as yet.

Now the matter of the blue envelope became more and more oppressive to Afzul *Khân* the more he thought of it. Easy enough to send it anonymously to Raby-*sahib's mem*, and so be quit of it once for all; but what if she had taken the Major's money, as Shunker asserted, in order to buy a new husband! And what if this paper of Eshmitt-*sahib's* meant more loot? Afzul was, all unconsciously, jealous of this white-faced *mem*, and but for a strange sort of loyalty to the boy he had betrayed would have liked to put the letter in the fire, shake himself loose of all ties, and return to his people.

"Nay! thou askest more than I have to give," replied Mahomed Lateef

to his questioning. "I know 'tis on paper they leave their moneys, for, as I said, the Colonel-sahib once asked me—'twas in China, during the war—to set my name as witness to something."

"Was it long-shaped, in a blue cover?" asked Afzul, eagerly.

"There was no cover, but it was long, like the summons from the courts. Stay! if thy mind be really set on such knowledge there is a friend of my poor Murghub's,—one who pleads in the courts—even now resting in his father's village but a space from here. He must know more than thou canst want to hear."

So in the cool of the next morning Afzul walked through the barren fields to see the pleader. A keen-faced, sallow young man, seemingly glad to escape for the time from patent-leather boots and such like products of civilisation. The Pathan found him squatting over against a *hookah* and basking in the sunshine like the veriest villager. For all that he was fulfilled with strange knowledge of law and order as administered by the alien, and Afzul sat open-eyed while he discoursed of legacies, and settlements, of the *feme covert* and the Married Women's Property Act, with a side glance at divorces and permanent alimony,—strange topics to be gravely discussed at the gateway of an Indian village through which men were carried to their rest and women to their bridal beds, with scant appeal to anything but custom. It utterly confused Afzul, though it sent him away convinced that the blue envelope must mean the loot of another lover to the *mem-sahib*.

"I will wait," he said to himself decisively; "yes, I will wait until she is faithful and marries the Major; then, as that pleader-fellow says, he will get the money. But if he leaves her and takes his money instead, then I will send her the envelope. That is but fair. God and his Prophet! but their ways are confusing. 'Tis better to steal and fight as we do; it makes the women faithful."

That evening he spent half an hour with a needle and thread borrowed from old Fâtma, engaged in sewing the blue envelope safely into his skin-coat. Then he sat once more stirring the old Mahommedan's blood with tales of fight and adventure till far on into the night. Yet the earliest blink of dawn found him creeping away from the still sleeping household, and his right arm bare of a massive gold bracelet he had worn for years. That he had left lying on the baby's pillow; for was not the child the son of his brother? Had not his father saved Marsden-sahib also? Ah! that score was not paid off yet. He still seemed to see the tall figure standing in the sunlight. Fool that he had been not to fire, instead of giving himself away at a mere word! Even now, though he knew that but for him Philip Marsden's bones would have been churning in a dreary dance of death at the bottom of some boiling pool in the Terwân torrent, he felt the bitterness of defeat. His very admiration, growing as it did with the other's display of pluck, added to his resentment. To take an order from a man when you had your finger on the trigger of your rifle! It was all very well to save a wounded comrade, to stand by him through thick and thin, but that did not show him, or convince yourself, that you cared as little for his menace as he had done for yours. Some day, yes, some day, he would stand up before Marsden-sahib and defy him. Then he could cry quits, and go home to his own people in peace.

Nevertheless, the news of his master's accident which met him on his return to Saudaghur sent him without an instant's pause to the factory where Philip still lay unconscious. And when he walked, at the dead of night, into the big bare room where Belle sat watching, his face softened at the sight of that dark head on the pillow. It softened still more when something of the past—Heaven knows what—seemed to come with him, rousing a low, quick voice

from the bed. "Afzul, it is cold ; put on more fuel. Do you not feel the cold ? Afzul, Afzul !" For that something had carried Philip Marsden back to the smoky cave among the snows, although the windows stood wide open to let in the tardy coolness of the summer night.

The Pathan drew himself together and stood at attention. "*Huzoor !*" he answered quietly. "It is done ; the fire blazes."

Belle in the half-shadows thrown by the sheltered lamp stood up looking kindly at the new-comer. "I'm glad you have come, Afzul," she whispered ; "he has been calling for you so often."

Behind his military salute the man smiled approvingly. She was of the right sort, faithful to the old love. Marsden-*sahib* should marry her and get the money, if that was the way they managed things over the black water. And this solution of the question grew upon him as he watched her unfailing devotion when, between them, they helped the sick man through the dreary trouble which was all too familiar to the Pathan. "It was so in the cave," he would say, as time dragged on, through days when the sick man lay still and silent, through nights when the quick hurried words never seemed to leave his lips, and it was all they could do to keep on the bandages.

"It's the bullet in the shoulder blade that's troublin' him," said the clever little Irish doctor, who rode forty miles every day between two trains in order to see his patient and keep an eye on his hospital. "Put three more days' strength into him, Mrs. Raby, and I'll bring over another man and we'll have at it somehow. The wound has niver healed, and niver will till it gets a fair chance."

Shortly after this Belle found herself pacing up and down the verandah, scarcely daring to think of what was going on within. Would he die ; was this really the end ? Was it to be peace at last, and no more struggle ?

And lo and behold ! when the doctors let her into the room again he was lying with a smile on his face, because the pain, the ceaseless pain which had annihilated everything else in the world, was gone.

"I've given you a lot of trouble," he said, and even as he spoke fell asleep from sheer, blessed ease.

After that again came a time when even Afzul stood aside and let the *mem* take the lead while he sat watching her curiously ; a time when it positively seemed more to her that Philip should take so many spoonfuls of nourishment every hour than that he should get better ; when the content of immediate success blotted out the thought of future failure, and the fear of death was forgotten in the desire of staving it off. Most people who have nursed a case in which even the doctors stay their hands and wait on Nature, know that strange dream-like life wherein the peaks and passes on the temperature-chart seem by contraries to raise or depress the whole world. Belle fought the fight bravely ; and not until she stood one day looking at a thermometer which registered normal did she feel a sinking at her heart. They had come down into the low levels of life ; they were back in the work-day world. Yet it was not the one they had left six weeks before. Even outwardly it had changed. The last green blade of grass had withered to a brown shadow on the sun-baked soil, and the dust-storms of May swept over the half-finished house.

"It looks dreary enough now, but just you wait till next year," said John Raby in his cheerful confident way. "The new dam will be finished, I hope, the water will come in at high level to the garden, the place will be a paradise of flowers, and we shall be dividing thirty-per-cent profit. There's a prospect ! Oh, by the way, did I ever tell you that beast Shunker Dás came down just after you did, Marsden, expecting to find me on my back like a turned turtle ? His face, when he saw

I was jolly as a sandboy, was a caution! By George! that man does hate me and no mistake."

Belle moved a step nearer her husband and laid her hand on the back of his easy-chair. Perhaps it was only his good-nature in leaving her free to nurse Philip, but somehow she felt they had drifted far apart during the past six weeks. "I seem to have heard nothing," she began, wistfully.

"Better employed on the head of the firm, my dear," he replied with a laugh. "You do her credit, Marsden. And now I must be off again, for there is some idiotic fuss at a village a few miles off. Shunker's work, I expect; but we are too strong for him. Even the native recognises the almighty dollar; and if they will only have patience I'll engage to treble the revenue of this district. Well, good-bye, Belle. I'll be back to-morrow or next day. Soon as I can 'get,' as the Americans say. Take care of yourselves."

When he had gone the punkah went on swinging, Belle's hands knitted busily, Philip's lay idle in the languor of convalescence; all was as before, and yet there was a difference, — a difference of which each was conscious, and which brought a certain restraint.

"Why does Shunker hate him?" asked Major Marsden.

There was no lack of confidence now between these two, and if he asked many questions she was quite ready to answer them faithfully, according to her lights. In this one, however, she failed to give a just impression, for the simple reason that she herself had no conception of the extent of the usurer's malice. In fact, his impotent rage on discovering that Philip's return had apparently made no difference to the Rabys would have been incredible to an educated English-woman, had she been aware of it, which she was not. The man, coming down to Saudaghur expectant of consternation, had found nothing but a

stir of fresh enterprise which his keen eye for business told him meant money. He wandered about from village to village, noting the golden seed being sown by his adversary, until the thought of the harvest in which he would have no share positively worried him into spleen and ague. And as he lay among the simple village folk a fresh idea for revenge came to console him. It is never hard to change the stolid opposition of the Indian peasant into stolid obstruction. No overt injustice is required, nothing but a disregard of custom; and so Shunker, taking advantage of the short period during which he had been associated in partnership with John Raby, began cautiously to call in debts in the name of the firm. Now in an Indian village a debt to the ancestral usurer is a debt; that is to say no flighty ephemeral liability which may crop up at any time claiming payment, but a good, solid inheritance going back sometimes a generation or two; a patent almost of solvency, a claim certainly for consideration at the hands of your banker; since a bumper crop might any day give you the upper-hand, or a bad one make it still more unwise for the creditor to present his bill. Thus, when Shunker disregarded time-worn prejudices to the extent of asking one Pera, an old-established customer, to make a settlement, the latter looked as if the foundations of the round world had been moved.

"Pay," he said slowly, his broad nostrils inflated like those of a horse shying at novelty; "I am always paying, *buniah-ji*, year by year, one harvest or another. God knows how much, but 'tis the old way, and old ways are good."

"They are good," sighed the usurer piously. "I like them myself, Pera; but new masters have new ways."

"New masters do not make new land," retorted the peasant shrewdly enough. "That remains the same. It must be sown; yet when I ask the seed-grain, as my fathers have done, the

answer is 'Pay!' Pay! of course I will pay when the crops ripen. Does not harvest mean payment to the peasant?"

"Your crops won't ripen long on those fields, I'm afraid, my poor Pera! The *sahib* wants land, here, everywhere, for this new factory of his. The men who will not pay will see what befalls. A little will go this year, a little more next. If I were alone 'twould be a different matter, for I was ever faithful to my friends."

Shunker's air of virtuous distress was admirable, but Pera laughed, the rough peasant's laugh full of broad toleration. "As vermin to the Pathan, so are the grain-dealers to the farmer! We warm you, and you feed on us till you grow troublesome, then—off goes the coat! One *buniah* is like another; why then dost change?"

"I change not, dunderhead!" cried Shunker enraged at a certain slow superiority in the other. "'Tis Raby-*sahib* claims payment."

"Then tell Raby-*sahib* I will pay when the river comes. It will come this year perhaps, if not, next year; if luck be bad, it may tarry twain, not longer. It comes ever sooner or later; then let us talk of payment."

Shunker leaned forward, his evil face kindling with malice. "But what, Pera, if the river never returns? What if Raby-*sahib's* new dam is built to prevent the water coming, so that he may have a grip on the land? What if the seed-grain thou sowest springs green, to die yellow, year after year?"

Pera Ditta's ox-eyes opened helplessly. What if the river never returned? The idea was too vast for him, and yet it remained with him long after Shunker had gone to sow the same seed of mischief in other minds. He did it deftly, taking care not to turn the screw too tightly at first, lest he should bring down on himself the villagers' final argument of the stick. The reason given by the Laird of Inverawe for hanging the Laird of Inverie, "that he just didna like him," has been given before now as fair cause for doing an unfortunate

usurer to death with quarterstaves. So Shunker did not disturb primeval calm too rudely. Nevertheless as he paused for a night, ere returning to Faizapore, in the empty house at Saudaghar where Kirpo had passed the months of Rāmu's captivity, he felt content with his labours. He had started a stone of unpopularity on its travels, which by and by would bring down an avalanche on his enemy.

As he lounged on the string bed, set forcoolness on the flat roof, he told himself, not without a measure of truth, that sooner or later all his enemies perished. Ah, if it were only as easy to keep those you loved in life as it was to drive those you hated down to death! But it was not; and the thought of frail, sickly Nuttu came, as it often did, to take the savour even from revenge. The memory of deserted Kirpo's sons, —those strapping youngsters whom he had often seen playing on that very roof—made him groan and roll over on his fat stomach to consider the possibility of marrying yet another wife. He had married so many only to find disappointment. As his face came back, disheartened, to the unsympathetic stars which fought against him, he started as if he had been shot. For there was Kirpo herself tall and menacing standing beside the bed. The veil, wrapped tightly round her body, left her disfigured death's-head face visible.

"Don't be more of a coward than need be," she said scornfully, as the Lāla, after shooting up like a Jack-in-the-box, began to sidle away from her, his dangling legs swinging wildly in his efforts to move his fat form. "I've not come to beat the breath from thy carcass. 'Twill die soon enough, never fear; and just now there is a son to perform the obsequies. There won't be one by and by."

The indifference of her voice, and the aptness of her words to his own thoughts, roused the Lāla's rage. "What dost want, hag of a noseless one?" he shrieked. "She-devil! base-born! —"

"Not bad words, Lāla," she inter-

rupted calmly. "I've had enough of them. I want money. I'm starving; thou knowest it. What else could I be?"

"Starving!" The word rolled sweeter than any honey under Shunker's tongue. "Then starve away. So thou thoughtest to trick me, me! How didst like the bangles, Kirpo dear? the brave bangles,—he,—he!"

To his surprise the allusion failed to touch her. Instead of breaking into abuse she looked at him curiously, drew her veil so as to hide all but her great dark eyes, and squatted down, as if for a chat, on the ground opposite to him.

"Look here, Lâla," she said. "This is no matter for ill words; 'tis business. What is past, is past. I'm going to give thee a chance for the future,—a last chance! Dost hear? So I've come to say I am starving. For six months I paid for my food in this very place, paid for it in thy pleasure. Fair and square so far. But now, because of that pleasure, Râmu is in jail again and I am noseless. Then Râmu's people have taken his sons,—*hai! hai!* his beautiful sons—from me because of that pleasure. Is not that payment enough, Lâla? Shall I starve also?"

"Why not?" chuckled Shunker. "I have no need of thee any more."

Kirpo leaned forward with hand raised in warning, her fierce eyes on his face. "Have a care, Lâla, have a care! It is the last chance. Thou dost not want me; good. I asked for naught to be taken; I asked for something to be given."

"Not a *paisa*, not a *pai*!" broke in the usurer brutally. "I'm glad of thy starvation; I'm glad they've taken away thy sons."

"Stop, Lâla!" shrieked Kirpo, her calm gone, her voice ringing with passion. "I did not say *my* sons! I said Râmu's! Look, Shunker, look! I have another,—" as she spoke, she tore her veil aside—"in my arms, Lâla! Is he not fair and strong for a two months' babe? Would you not like to have him? No, no, hands off, no touching! He is mine, I say, mine,

mine!" She sprang to her feet holding the baby high above his head exultantly. He sat staring at it, and trembled like a leaf.

"Kirpo!" he gasped, "give it to me; by all the Gods in Heaven, I will pay——"

A peal of mocking laughter greeted the words. "Bah! Now I have roused thee. 'Tis all a lie, Shunker, all a lie! Only a trick of starving Kirpo's! And yet, somehow he favours thee as thou mightest have been before the grease came to spoil beauty. For all that not like Nuttu, the sickly one. Nuttu will die, this one will live. Wilt thou not, heart's darling and delight?" She covered the babe with a storm of passionate kisses.

"Kirpo! by all the torments of hell——" urged Shunker.

"What! art there already? Not so fast, Lâla, not so fast! Wait till I bring this babe to curse thy pyre, to spit on thy ashes,—thy son,—thy son!"

"It is a lie!" burst in the wretched man, beside himself with doubt, certainty, and desire. "He is not mine."

"Well said, Shunker, well said!" laughed Kirpo triumphantly, growing calmer with her evident success. "He is not thine, he is mine." She folded her veil round the sleeping child with a flourish, as if to emphasise her words, and stepped backwards. As she stood there sombre, malignant, the winged thoughts flew through Shunker's brain. There is, strictly speaking, no possible divorce, no remarriage for the Hindu; but if Râmu could be got out of the way, he, Shunker Dâs, might pose as a social reformer. It was a fine idea. Or he might,—a thousand suggestions found expression in the covetous hands he stretched towards his victim. "Kirpo, listen!"

"I will not listen. I gave the chance for the child's sake. Now——"

"Kirpo! take what thou likest——"

"I *will* take what I like, Lâla. That is revenge!" Before he could say another word she had turned her back on him, and ere he could rise to stop her was down the narrow stair

and out into the street with her precious burden.

So Lâla Shunker Dâs lay down and cried, because not one of the women his wealth had bought could bear him a son save this Kirpo whom he had betrayed. Fool that he was not to have seen she must have some deep move on hand ere she came to beg of him ! Revenge ! He had dreamt of that himself ; but what was his poor spite to this devilish malice ? He tried to remember that want was a hard master ; that Kirpo's own people came from beyond the fourth¹ river and were therefore useless to her as a refuge ; that it was woman's way to bark more than bite. In his heart of hearts he knew that she had said truly when she offered him his last chance. And, as a matter of fact, while he sat trying to recover confidence on the edge of his bed, Kirpo and the baby, with many a swing of the full skirts as she strode along, were making their way direct to the enemy's camp ; in other words to John Raby's new factory. The *sahib* had interfered on her behalf once, and he hated Shunker. He could give her coolie's work on the new dam, and in return she could give him valuable information as to the usurer's little game. The Lâla had had his chance, partly for the sake of comfort, partly for the sake of the child. Now she would devote herself to revenge and gain a living at the same time.

Of all this, however, Belle was profoundly ignorant ; nor did Kirpo say more to her new master than was necessary to show a sound, conceivable reason for her professions of attachment to his cause. John Raby laughed when he heard of his enemy's vows of vengeance ; but he was wise enough to see the prospect of unpopularity with his poorer neighbours, and the advisability of being prepared for opposition.

"I hope you don't mind, Marsden," he said a day or two before the Major left, "but I've been treating with that truculent rascal of yours, Afzul. He's

¹ The extreme south-east.

coming back to India, he says, next cold weather, on business or something. I've asked him to bring me a gang of navvies and do overseer himself till the next rains. Those hill-men work like Englishmen, and the new dam will require constant care until it solidifies ; besides, I believe in mercenaries ; a bandit is always handy."

"And Afzul consented ?" asked Philip in surprise.

"Jumped at it. There is no one like the noble savage for turning an honest penny when he can, and I own to tempting him pretty stiffly. We may want that sort of fellow by and by to keep things going."

"I am surprised at Afzul for all that," continued Philip, thoughtfully. "I wonder what he means."

"Devotion to you," laughed the other ; "you should have heard him. And you too, Belle ! He laid the butter on thick about your capabilities as a nurse."

She looked up quickly. "I suppose it's ungrateful, but I don't like that man. He always seems to have something in his mind that I can't get hold of."

"He is very intelligent," replied her husband with a shrug of his shoulders ; "and took quite an interest in the business, I assure you ; he asked a lot of questions. And, to tell the truth, I think a thoroughly devoted rascal is the most useful thing in creation ; so I hope he is one."

Philip laughed. "Shall I leave my interests in his hands, Belle, or in yours ?"

"Leave them to me, my dear fellow," interrupted John. "Belle doesn't understand business."

CHAPTER XXI.

PERHAPS her husband was right in saying Belle did not understand business. At any rate she had little to do with it in the uneventful months which followed. It was a dry, hot year bringing no respite of rain to the long weary hours. It brought plenty

of work, however, to John Raby, who was up with the dawn, and never seemed to tire or flag in his unceasing pursuit of success. In good sooth, as Belle confessed to herself, Philip could have found no better custodian for his money; and this knowledge was a great consolation,—how great she scarcely realised until something came to disturb it.

She was writing to Philip Marsden one day when John entered the room. She rose hastily, even though she felt vexed with herself for doing so. Why should she not write? As a matter of fact she spent a considerable portion of her time over these letters. Sometimes she would resolutely put pen and paper away, and set to work to sew every possible button on John's under-garments, or perform some other virtuous domestic duty, only to find when all was done that leisure still stared her in the face. For the leisure of a long hot-weather day in an out-station may be compared to that of a solitary cell. Their nearest neighbours were twenty miles away, and Belle's experiment of having her youngest and most good-natured step-sister on a visit had ended in disastrous failure. The girl had cried for three days consecutively out of sheer low spirits. It was all very well, she said plaintively, when one was married and got something by it; but what was the use of being miserable before there was any necessity for it, and when one couldn't even scold the servants to amuse one's self? By and by, when Charlie Allsop got his step, she would no doubt have to put up with jungle-life for a time; but now her dearest Belle must excuse her. Maud had written *such* a description of the dress she was going to wear at the Masonic ball; and really, now that Mabel was married to her widower, and Charlie's schooling paid for by John, they got on splendidly in the little house. Why shouldn't Belle go back to Missouri with her and take rooms at Scott's Hotel? They would have such fun!

But, though her husband gave her full leave to do as she liked, Belle shook her head over this tempting offer. She felt that she could not afford to neglect the tithes of mint and cummin, the jots and tittles of the law; she must at any rate make offering of what she had to give. So she stayed at home, and blushed violently when she rose from her desk.

"Writing to Marsden?" said John carelessly. "I thought you might be, and I wanted you just to give him a hint or two about the business. It would come naturally from you and save surprise. The fact is, there has been a lot of unforeseen expense; then the firm in Calcutta to which I sent my first batch of stuff has failed. Altogether I sha'n't be able to spare any interest on the money this year."

"No interest?" Belle could only echo his words stupidly, for the very idea of such a contingency had never entered her head, and the fact seemed to bring back all the old sickening dislike to the situation.

"Well!" He looked at her with the expression of distasteful patience which always came to his face when awaiting a remonstrance. But none followed. She was so absorbed in the fresh shame, to her, of this failure, that she could think of nothing else. "Of course it is a pity," he went on, somewhat mollified by her silence, "but Marsden isn't a fool. He knows one has generally to wait for a return; indeed I consider it lucky we have not to borrow. I wish you wouldn't look so tragic over it, Belle. We are not ruined; far from it. Only for the present we have to live on our capital."

Belle's face brightened. "Could we not pay the interest out of capital, too, John?"

Her husband burst out laughing as he threw himself into an easy chair. "Upon my soul, for utter incapacity to understand even the morals of business, commend me to a really good woman. Interest out of capital! We are not a swindling company, Belle."

"We might pay it out of your own savings, John," she urged, knowing how hopeless it would be to argue.

"Transference from one budget-head to another, and consequent cooking of accounts! No, my dear; I left that system of book-keeping behind me when I quitted Government service. Marsden must go without his interest for the present; he has very good pay, and the loss is quite temporary. In any circumstances the returns would have been unfavourable for this year, owing to the drought. Why, even with the aid of the dam I have scarcely had enough water for a quarter of the acreage I intend to have next season."

His voice tailed off into indifference as his attention became concentrated in a paper he had taken up, and there was an end of the matter so far as he was concerned.

Pens, ink and paper had lost their attraction for Belle that day, and for many days after; indeed, it was not until the knowledge that her long silence would cause anxiety that she faced the task of finishing her letter to Major Marsden. The very certainty that he would care little for the absence of the promised dividend, and be quite ready to accept her husband's views on the matter, made it seem all the more hard for her; and though she determined to leave the proper person to tell the unwelcome news, she found herself hampered on all sides by her own knowledge. Even remarks on the dryness of the weather savoured of an attempt at excuse, and for the first time she felt glad to write her signature at the bottom of the page. When it was done she leant her head over her crossed arms in a sudden rush of weariness, and thought how different it would have been if she could have met Philip on equal terms; if they could have told each other the truth in all things. Theoretically it was all very well to say that the money had nothing to do with the position; but practically she could not get rid of the conviction that she and John were preying on a man's sense of honour, or, worse, on his affections. It was

no use telling herself she was despicable in having such thoughts; that, setting love aside, friendship itself excluded the question of give or take. As a matter of fact Philip did give her all he had, and he took,—what did he not take! She cowered before that, the worst question of all. She could not escape from the haunting sense of wrong which seemed to sap the strength of her self-respect; and back through all her heart-burnings came the one foolish fancy that if she could only have met Philip with the money, or even a decent five-per-cent. interest on it, in her hand, she could have looked into his face with clear unshadowed eyes. And now! How was she to meet him when there was not even a dividend?

Philip meanwhile was undergoing no qualms; on the contrary, he was having a very good time. To begin with he was in command of the regiment and drawing, as John Raby said, excellent pay. Further more he was enjoying, as was inevitable, the return to health and life after eighteen months of death to all pleasure. Lastly, his conscience was absolutely at rest in regard to Belle. He would have been more or less than human had he not been aware that he had behaved as well as a man could, in very trying circumstances. In fact he was a little complacent over what had been, so far, a very simple and easy solution of a problem which other people held to be insoluble. He sent Belle the last new books, and wrote her kind brotherly letters, and thought of her as the best friend he had, and always with the same underlying consciousness of pure virtue. He forgot, however, that poor Belle stood in a very different position, one in which calm peace was well-nigh impossible. So as her letters became less frequent and less frank, he began to puzzle somewhat captiously over the cause. Finally he hinted at an explanation, and receiving nothing but jesting replies, he took ten days' leave and went down to Saudaghur, ostensibly to settle the half-yearly accounts; for

both John and he found a sort of solemn refuge from the truth in the observance, so far as was possible, of strict business relations.

It gave him quite a shock to find how much change his few months' absence had wrought. The bare deserted house where Belle had nursed him back to life, and where he and she had spent so many days forgetful of the work-day world, content in a kindly constant companionship, was now a luxurious house hedged about by conventionalities. The drawing-room, where his sofa had reigned supreme, was full of *bric à brac* tables and heaven knows what obstacles, through which a man had to thread his way like a performing ape. Belle herself, despite her kind face and soft voice, was no longer the caretaker full of sympathy. She was his hostess, his friend, but also another man's wife; a fact of which she took care to remind him by saying she was glad he had come in time to celebrate the anniversary of her wedding-day on the morrow. Despite his theories Philip did not like the change. It vexed him, too, that she should look pale and worried when he had really done all, all that an honest man could do, to smooth her path. Had he not even kept away for five whole months? So he was decidedly out of humour when, coming from a long spell of business with John in the office, he found her alone for the first time. She was standing by the fireplace in the drawing-room, and he made his way towards her intent on words. But she forestalled him. "Well! he has told you about it, I suppose,—that there is no dividend?" she said defiantly; and as she spoke she crushed the withered roses she had been removing from a vase and flung them on to the smouldering embers.

He looked at her in surprise. "I scarcely expected one. Oh, Belle!" he continued hotly, "is it that? Did you think, could you think I would care?"

She gave a little hard laugh. "How stupid you are! Of course you don't

mind. Can't you see it is that,—which hurts? Can't you understand it is that,—your kindness,—which must hurt,—always?"

The dead leaves had caught fire and flamed up, throwing a glare of light on both their faces. It seemed to light up their hearts also. Perhaps she had not meant to say so much; yet now that she had said it she stood gracefully upright, looking him in the eyes, reckless, ready for anything. The sight of her brought home to Philip what he had forgotten before; that in this problem of his he had not to do with one factor but with two, and one of them a woman. Not a passionate one, it is true, but a woman to whom sentiment and emotion were more than reason; a woman whose very innocence left her confused and helpless, uncertain of her own foothold, and unable to draw the hard-and-fast line between good and evil without which she felt lost in a wilderness of wrong. The recognition startled him, but at the same time aroused his combativeness.

"I confess I don't see why it should," he said rather coldly. "Surely I have a perfect right to set,—other things before money, and it is wrong—"

"Shall I give you a copy-book so that you may write the sentiment down for future reference, Philip?" she interrupted swiftly. "Copy-book maxims about right and wrong are so useful when one has lost the way, aren't they? For myself I am tired of them, dead tired,—dead tired of everything." And once again with a gesture of utter weariness she leant against the mantelpiece, her head upon her crossed arms.

His hands clenched as if to hold something tighter, something that seemed slipping from him. "I am sorry," he said huskily. "Is it my fault?"

She flamed round upon him. "Yes! it is your fault! All your fault! Why did you ever leave me that money?"

The truth, and the unfairness of her words, bit deep. "It was 'Why did you come back to take it away?' when

we first met," he retorted in rising anger. "I told you then I had a right to live if *I* chose. I tell you now I will take the money back if *you* choose. I will do it to-day if you like. It is only lent; I can give notice."

"What difference will it make now?" she went on recklessly. "Will it undo the mischief? Your legacy did it all. It made John——" She broke off suddenly, a look of terror came to her eyes, and she turned away.

"Well! I am waiting to hear. It made John——?"

"Nothing," she said in a low voice. "What is the good? It is all past."

"But I have a right to know; I will know. Belle, what wrong did my legacy do you? What wrong of which I know nothing? Let me see your face—I must see it—" He bent over her, almost rough in his impatience at the fine filmy threads of overwrought feeling which, seeming so petty to a man, yet have the knack of tying him hand and foot. What did she mean? Though they had never talked of such things, the fact that her legacy had decided John's choice could be no novelty even to her. A woman who had money must always know it would enhance her other charms. Then suddenly a hitherto unappreciated fact recurred to him—if this was her wedding day, she must have been married very soon after—then the memory of a marble summer-house in a peach garden, with his will on the table and John standing by, flashed upon him, making the passionate blood leap up in resentment. "Belle!" he cried imperiously, "did he,—did you know? Have you known——?" He paused, his anger yielding to pain. Had she known this incredible baseness all these weary months, those months during which he had been priding himself on his own forbearance? And she had said nothing! Yet she was right; for if once this thing were made clear between them what barrier would remain? Why should they guard the honour of a man who had himself betrayed it? In the silence which ensued

it was lucky for them both that the room was full of memories of her kind touch, soothing his restless pain; so the desire to give something back in kind came uppermost.

"Is there nothing I can do?" he said at last, moving aside and standing square and steady. "Nothing I can say or do to make it easier for you?"

"If you could forget——"

He shook his head. "I will go away if you like, though I don't see why I should."

"Then it would only be giving up one thing more to please me," she answered with a little sad smile. "Why should you give up anything, when I can give—nothing! Ah, Philip, Philip! If you had only taken poor Dick's will and were free to go,—if you chose."

He frowned moodily. "I should not choose, so it would make no difference; except that you think there would be one. I cannot see it. As for the will, I'm afraid it is hopeless; but if you like I can take leave and try. Afzul might come with me."

"If I like!" she echoed in despair. "If I like! It always comes back to that."

The slow tears overflowing her tired eyes cut him to the quick, though in sober truth he thought them needless. "It must,—seeing that I love you. Why should you shrink from the truth, Belle? Great Heavens! what have you or I done that we should be ashamed of ourselves?"

"Don't let's speak of it, Philip," she cried in a sort of terror. "It is all my fault, I know; but I cannot help it. It is no use saying I am wrong; everything is wrong from beginning to end."

And though he fretted and fumed, argued and appealed, nothing he could say sufficed to re-assure her. Rightly or wrongly she could not view the situation as he viewed it. She was galled and chafed on every side; nor could he fail to see during the next four days that his presence only brought her additional misery. She seemed unable to take anything naturally, and she shrank

equally from seeming to avoid being alone with him, or from being alone. Yet, with true womanly inconsequence, she shrank most of all when he told her that he had made up his mind to go, and not to return until she sent for him. They were walking up and down the new dam which curved across a bend in the sandy reach, waiting for her husband, who with Afzul and his gang of bandits was busy seeing to a strengthening of the side nearest the river. A red sun was setting over the jagged purple shadow of the Suleiman Hills, and flaring on the still pools of water below the embankment.

"I am driving you away," she said despondently. "You cannot even look after your own business because of me."

Then his patience gave way. "Damn the business!" he cried heartily, and walked along beside her kicking the little clods from his path before turning to her apologetically. "I beg your pardon, Belle, but it is a little trying. Let us hope the business will be successfully dammed, and then, according to John, I shall get my money back in two years. So cheer up; freedom is beneath your feet."

Just below them, measuring up earthwork, stood John Raby and Afzul Khân. As they passed the latter looked up, *salaaming* with broad grins. "I wonder if he will take her away soon," was his thought. "I wish he would; then I could get rid of the paper and be off home by summer with Raby-*sahib's* rupees in my pocket. What is he waiting for? She likes him, and Raby-*sahib* would be quite content with the money."

John looked up too, and nodded. "Don't wait for me, good people. I have to go over to the further end. You needn't keep tea for me, Belle; I prefer a whiskey-peg. Ta, ta!"

And as they moved off, their figures showing dark against the red sky, he looked after them, saying to himself that the Major could not complain. One way and another he got his money's worth.

"Your husband works too hard, Belle," said Philip. "You should persuade him to take it easier."

"He is so anxious to make it a success," she replied quickly.

"So are we all," retorted Philip cynically. "We ought to manage it between us, somehow."

As they passed the coolies' huts a big strapping woman with her face hidden in her veil came out and *salaamed*.

"Who is that?" asked Philip at once. The last few days had brought him a curious dissatisfaction with Belle's surroundings. Despite the luxurious home she seemed out of keeping with Afzul and his bandits, the tag-rag and bobtail of squalid coolies swarming about the place, and the stolid indifference of the peasants beyond the factory.

"A *protégée* of John's. He got her out of trouble somewhere. He says he has the biggest lot of miscreants on the frontier on his works. They don't look much, I must allow; but this woman seems to like me. She has such a jolly baby. I had to doctor it last week. How's Nuttu to-day, Kirpo?"

The woman, grinning, opened her veil and displayed a sleeping child.

"Isn't he pretty, Philip?" said Belle softly. "And see, they have pierced his nose and ears like a girl's."

"For luck, I suppose. May God spare him to manhood," prefaced Philip piously in native fashion before he asked the mother if it were not so.

She shook her head. "No, Protector of the poor! All my boys are healthy. He is called Nuttu, so that as he thrives some one else of the same name may dwindle and pine. That is why." She hugged the baby to her with an odd smile.

"She could not have meant that there was really another child whose death she desired," said Belle as they went on.

"I would not answer for it if I were you. They are a queer people. By Jove! How that woman does

hate some one ; I'm glad it isn't you, Belle !”

And Kirpo looking after them was saying in her turn that they were very queer people. If he was her lover why did the *mem* look so unhappy ? The *sahib-logue* did not cut off their wives' noses, or put them in prison ; so what did it matter ?

Truly those two were compassed about by a strange cloud of witnesses as they strolled homewards. Perhaps the civilised world would have judged them as harshly. But no tribunal, human or divine, could have judged Belle more harshly than she did herself ; and herein lay all the trouble. She could not accept facts and make the best of them.

John Raby coming in later found the two reading solemnly, one on either side of the fire, and told them they were horribly unsociable. “ I couldn't get away before,” he said. “ Afzul wanted a day's leave and I had to measure up before he started.”

“ Has he gone already ? I'm sorry,” remarked Philip. “ I wished to see him before I leave to-morrow.”

“ To-morrow !” John Raby looked from one to another. “ Have you been quarrelling ?”

And poor Belle, with the necessity for derisive denial before her, felt more than ever that she was on the broad path leading to destruction.

“ I am sorry I have to go,” said Philip with perfect truth ; “ but I really am of no use here.”

CHAPTER XXII.

COULD Philip Marsden have seen into Mahomed Lateef's old tower about the time he was leaving Nilgunj his regrets might have had a still more truthful ring, and Belle might have been saved from once more adding to the difficulties of her own lot, and, as it were, making a stumbling-block of her own good intentions. For in that case, Major Marsden would have stopped another day in order to see his old friend, and in the course of

conversation would have heard things which might have changed the current of subsequent events ; but Fate decreed otherwise.

More than once, seeing the daily increasing poverty of his patron, Afzul Khán had suggested an appeal to the Major, as one sure to do something for the father of the man who had stood between him and death ; but the stubborn old malcontent had lumped the whole Western creation in his category of ingrates. “ The past is past,” he would say angrily. “ I will not even ask justice from one of them. And, according to thy tales, Marsden-*sahib* has taken to trade and leagued himself with Raby, who is no better than a *buniah*,—no better than Shunker Bahádúr, whom God smite to hell ! Hast heard what they are doing down yonder ? Pera Ditta was here last week, saying his land was to be sold because he could not pay. And how could he pay when water never came ? And how could water come when strangers enter and build dams without let or hindrance ?”

Afzul frowned. “ True, father, and 'tis about that dam I would have you speak. Not, look you, that it did harm this year. Twas God's fault, not Raby's, that the river failed, though folk will not have it so. And next year even the dam will do good, not harm, if a sluice be put in it such as they have north in the big canals. Look you, Raby is no fool. Before Allah ! he is wise ; and he offered to put one, so that the water would run every year right away to the south, if the people would promise him to grow indigo and dig part of the channel. But Shunker, or God knows who, hath stuffed their ears, and they will not listen. So Raby means the pig-headed fools shall learn reason. I blame him not, but that is no cause why you should starve ; and starve you must if the river does not come.”

“ I will starve sooner than beg.”

“ And the child ?”

That was an argument which invariably brought the discussion to a close in vehement objections to interference

and loud-voiced assertions of independence. Nevertheless, Afzul returned to the charge again and again, moved to insistence by a personal desire to be free from the necessity of eking out the expenses of the household. He gave cheerfully enough to the women, on the sly lest the old martinet should wring his neck for the impertinence; but for all that he wanted to be free to go his own ways when summer came. If the sluice were made and a constant supply of water insured, the old man and the women would at least escape starvation. John Raby, who had found the Pathan singularly intelligent and with some knowledge of levelling (learned from poor Dick), had so far given him confidence that he knew what ought to be done; but he was not well enough up in the whole matter to understand that his master had considerable excuse for refusing to do it. As a matter of fact the dam had been constructed with great care so as to avoid cutting off the water-supply from the neighbouring villages, where the floods came with fair regularity. John Raby had even spent money in improving their chances, on certain conditions about indigo, which he well knew would eventually be of enormous benefit to the people themselves. In regard to those further afield he had made a very fair proposal, which, mainly owing to Shunker's machinations, they had rejected; briefly, he had offered a constant supply of water at the price of a little labour and a few reasonable concessions. When they refused his terms, he smiled and went on building his dam. Up to a certain flood-point he knew it would be an obstruction; beyond that, the river would still find its way. He only enlarged the cycle of floodless years; but on this fact he counted for eventual submission. As for the owners of the few small holdings between the dam and the basin of alluvial soil tilled by these pig-headed Hindus, he was sorry for them; but as it was quite impossible for him to ensure a water-supply without giving

it beyond, their best plan would be to exert their influence towards a reasonable solution of the difficulty. In a matter like this he was not a man to swerve a hairsbreadth from his own plan for the sake of anybody. He conceived that he had a perfect right to do as he chose, and if others disputed his action they could go to law about it; only, long before the vexed question of the frequency of flood in past years could be decided one way or the other, he felt certain that the sight of the surrounding prosperity would have overcome all opposition.

Afzul Khân, however, only half in the secret, believed that the sluice-gate might be made by an appeal to Major Marsden; and, when the latter came to the factory, took a day's leave on purpose to rouse the old Khân to action, it being quite hopeless to expect him to ask a favour of John Raby, of whom he never spoke save with a gibe. Perhaps the thought of seeing a familiar face influenced the old man, for when the argument reached its usual climax of, "And the child, Khân-sahib, what of the child?" he gave a fierce sigh, and pressing the boy who was sitting on his knee closer to his heart, muttered impatiently, "What is the pride of a man before the hunger of a child? I will go; so hold thy devil of a tongue, and let us have peace!"

Afterwards, however, when Afzul with solemn satisfaction at his victory was polishing up the old warrior's sword, Mahomed Lateef became restive again. "I know not that I will go. He owes me somewhat, 'tis true, and in past time I thought him just; but I like not this talk of trade; 'tis not a soldier's task."

The Pathan leaning over the shining blade breathed on it to test its lustre. "Wah! Khân-sahib, all's fair in love and war. Men do much for the sake of a woman without tarnishing their honour longer than my breath lingers on good steel. Marsden-sahib did it for love of the *mem*, look you."

The old man scowled. "I like not that either. Let him choose the one or

the other, and use his sword to keep his choice."

Afzul smiled cunningly. "Wait a while, *Khân-sahib*, wait a while; the fowler must have time to lure his bird, and some women have cold hearts."

"She hath a heart of ice. Yea, I will go, Afzul, and I will tell him of Murghub Ahmad and how she bore false witness."

"Not so! Thou wilt ask for water, and get thy revenge safe in thy pocket; it lies heavy on an empty stomach."

So they borrowed a pink-nosed pony from the pleader's father in the next village, and with his little grandson, arrayed in huge turban and tarnished tinsel coat, disposed in front of the high-peaked saddle, *Khân Mahomed Lateef Khân* set off to see the Major and plead the child's cause. A picturesque group they made, as they passed along the sandy ways and treeless stretches of hard sun-baked soil; Afzul leading the pony, the boy laughing and clapping his hands at the novelty, the old soldier's white beard showing whiter than ever against the child's dark curls, *Fatmâ* and *Haiyât* standing outside, recklessly unveiled, to shriek parting blessings and injunctions. And lo! after all these preparations, after all this screwing up of courage and letting down of pride, the Major had gone. Afzul could scarcely believe his ears. Gone! and he had been reckoning on giving certain hints about Dick's will which might have served to bring matters to a crisis. He returned to the hut where he had left the *Khân* and his grandson while he went to arrange for an interview, and tried to persuade *Mahomed Lateef* not to allow his journey to go for nothing, but to prefer his request to *Raby-sahib* himself. He might even write a petition, and demand that it should be sent on to the Major, if pride forbade asking a favour of the former. Afzul might as well have urged the old man to wear patent-leather shoes or perform any other such abomination of desolation. "Am I a *baboo* that I should cringe and beg?" he answered, wrathfully. "The Major is a soldier

and knows what it means to stave a blow from a comrade's head; 'tis but defending your own in the future. But this man! He would talk of rupees, and I have none to give. Let it be, fool! I will stop the night here as was arranged, since the child seems tired. To-morrow we can return. I am not so far through that a day's journey will kill me."

So, from the recesses of the windowless shanty, he watched *John Raby* passing back to the house when the day's work was done; then he went forth in the twilight and prowled about the new factory, noting the unmistakable signs of masterful energy with a curious mixture of admiration and contempt. "As thou sayest he is a man, and no mere money-bag like *Shunker*," was his final comment. "Come, little one, say thy evening petition and let me roll thee in thy quilt, for thine eyes are heavy."

The child, already half asleep, slid from his grandfather's knee, and standing stretched his little hands skywards. "God bring justice to those who brought my father injustice," he murmured drowsily.

A savage exultation came to the old face looking down on the curves and dimples. "*Ameen, ameen!* Justice! That is all we seek. Come, light of mine eyes, and God give thee many wakenings."

Thereafter the two men sat silent waiting for sleep to come to the child. And it came, but not for long. Perhaps in less careful hands the boy had taken chill, perhaps Afzul's more sumptuous fare was the exciting cause; anyhow, a few hours afterwards *Kirpo*, roused by the helpless men from the death-like slumber of the domesticated savage, found little *Hussan Ahmad* struggling for breath in his grandfather's arms, a prey to spasmodic croup. Of course she had not the remotest idea what was the matter, or what was to be done. She could but take the child to her capacious bosom and add to the general alarm by shrill sympathy. It was a fit—

the dear one would die—*Hai, hai!* some one had bewitched it. Then suddenly an inspiration seized her. The *mem!* let them send for the *mem!* But last week her own boy had had the gripes until the *mem* came with a little bottle and cured him. *Hai, hai!* the darling was choking! Send for the *mem*, if they would not have him die before their eyes.

Afzul looked at the grandfather interrogatively. Pride, fear, resentment, and love fought hard for the mastery. "She will not come; she hath a heart of ice," quavered the old voice, seeking for excuse and escape from responsibility.

"Who can count on a woman? But death is sure; and she is wise in such ways, I know. Say, *Khân-sahib*, shall I go?"

There was an instant's pause, broken by the child's hoarse crow. Then the faith of a life-time spoke. "Go! It is Kismet. Give her the chance; it is God's will to give it. She may not come, and then——"

But ten minutes after Belle Raby in her soft white evening dress had the struggling child in her arms and reassuring words on her lips. Afzul *Khân*, too, held a bottle and a teaspoon, whereat Kirpo's face broadened to content. "Have no fear, master," she whispered in the old man's ear; "'tis the same one, I swear it. A charm, a potent charm!"

Most Englishwomen in India gain some knowledge of doctoring, not only from necessity, but from the neighbourliness which turns them into nurses where in England they would be content with kind inquiries; and, though croup is comparatively rare among the native children, Belle had seen it treated among English ones. Such knowledge, a medicine-chest, and common sense seem, and indeed often act, like magic to the ignorant eyes helplessly watching their loved ones fight for life. The old Mahomedan stood aside, bolt upright as if on parade, a prey to dull regrets and keen joy as Belle's kind voice conjured

up endless things beyond the thought or comprehension even of the child's mother, had she been there. Hot water, a bath fetched from somewhere in the dark beyond the feeble glimmer of light in which those bare white arms glanced about the child's brown body, ice, a soft white blanket, within the folds of which peace seemed to come to the struggling limbs till sleep actually claimed the child again.

"He is all right now," said Belle smiling. "Keep him in your arms, Kirpo, and give him plenty of air. I will come to-morrow and see him again. Afzul, have you the lantern?"

She stood,—a strange figure in that mud-floored, mud-roofed hovel—fastening the silver clasp of her fur cloak with slim fingers sparkling with jewels; a figure more suitable to some gay gathering on the other side of the world. Then from the darkness into the ring of light where she stood stepped another figure; a tall old man, made taller by the high-twined green turban proclaiming him a past pilgrim to the great shrine of warriors, a man with his son's medals on a threadbare velvet coat, and a sharp curved sword held like a sacrament in his outstretched palms. "*Huzoor!*" he said bowing his proud old head. All the conflicting emotions of the past hour had concentrated themselves to this. Words, either of gratitude or blame, were beyond him. God knows which, given opportunity of calm thought, he might have offered. But so, taken by surprise, carried beyond his own personal interests by admiration, he gave, in the true old fighting instinct which dies hard amongst the Mahomedans, his allegiance to what was brave and capable. "*Huzoor!*"

The English girl had learnt enough of native customs to know her part. Those slim white fingers lingered an instant on the cold steel, and her bright eyes smiled up into the old man's face. "The gift is not mine, but yours." Perhaps it was; the faculty of just admiration is a great possession.

She found her husband still smoking cigarettes over a French novel. "By George! Belle," he said, "you look awfully nice. That sort of thing suits you down to the ground. You were born to be a Lady Bountiful, and send social problems to sleep with sentiment. By the way, do you know who the little beggar is? I asked the *khānsāman*; he is the son of that man Murghub Ahmad who was transported. His grandfather is living on the ancestral estate about ten miles down the old *nullah*. I'm precious glad Marsden didn't find him out, or he would have been bothering me to do something for the old fellow. And I haven't time just now for charity. I leave that to you, my dear; it suits you,—as I remarked just now—down to the ground."

Belle, who had turned very pale, said nothing, but she seemed to feel the chill of the cold steel at her fingertips. She understood better what that offering had meant, and, sentiment or no sentiment, something rose in her throat and kept her silent. Next morning, according to promise, she went over to the huts again. The dew shone on the flowers as she crossed the garden, and an indescribable freshness was in the air. The child, but newly aroused from a sweet sleep, was still surrounded by the white blanket in the midst of which he sat cuddled up, rubbing his eyes and yawning. Afzul was smiling at the door, the grandfather, calmed into stern politeness, standing by the bed.

"Rise, O Hussan Ahmad!" he said to the child after a few words of inquiry and reply. "Rise and say thy thanks to the *mem* for her kindness. They are due; they are justly due."

Still drowsy, and mindful only of an accustomed order, the boy stretched his chubby little arms skyward. "May God bring justice to those who brought injustice to my father."

Khān Mahomed Lateef Khān started as if he had been shot, and his right hand fell sharply on the child's shoulder, then wandered to his sword-hilt. "It is Fate," he muttered gloomily. "Out of his own mouth I am rebuked."

Belle's heart gave a great throb of anger and pain. She had lain awake piecing the stray threads of the story together till it had seemed to her a sad yet beautiful pattern on the web of life, and now—"Why do you say that?" she asked gently of the child, as if he were the only person present.

He looked at her fearlessly. "I say it morning and evening. Listen; may God bring justice to those who brought injustice to my father."

The eyes of those two men watching her were like spurs to her high spirit. "Listen," she said. "I will say it too. May God bring justice to those who brought injustice to your father."

The eyes fell and she passed out without another word. "By the God who made me," swore the old soldier, "she is a brave one, and she hath my sword! Remember that, Afzul. If the time should ever come, my sword at least is for her and hers. For the rest, the child has spoken."

Afzul smiled grimly. He was beginning to see what those two brave ones fancied in the pale-faced *mem*. She was too good for Raby-sahib with his rupees, he decided; yet women were always influenced by wealth. Perhaps the thought of what she would leave behind hindered her from following the Major. If so, a little reverse in the business might be beneficial. Anyhow, and come what may, he must get rid of that cursed blue envelope ere summer opened the passes for home-sick footsteps. Even if he had to leave it behind him unconditionally, he must do so, since by that time he would have money saved to last for an idle year or two.

(To be continued.)

LEAVES FROM A NOTE-BOOK.

A CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF HUMAN ERROR.

WE have all been laughing over Mr. Wheatley's amusing collection of Literary Blunders; and if, as the reviewers have been careful to remind us, we have laughed at many of them before, no great harm has been done. It is a poor story that will not bear telling more than once; and as the same story is rarely told twice in quite the same manner, there is always the mild excitement of new and conflicting readings. Without grammarians and scholiasts half the critic's occupation would be gone. In all the great History of Human Error there is no chapter more entertaining than that which Mr. Wheatley has classified as literary, and which is not necessarily limited to blunders made by writer or printer in the composition of books. How many of these blunders are genuine neither the collector nor any man can say, nor does it matter. Your truth is a sad hamperer of genius, was the answer a famous story-teller used to give to all such impertinent questions; and surely 'tis the cruellest welcome to give a good story to ask if it be true. As the copy-books tell us, it is the nature of man to blunder; and there is such an ample supply of the raw material to be found on this earth, (and not only in the schools), that we may assume at least a fair proportion of Mr. Wheatley's collection to have had some more or less remote foundation in fact. Many have no doubt been washed and trimmed during their transmission down the ages, have had a cocked hat and a dress-cane given them, as was Sir Walter's way, who rarely found a good story without leaving it better. With that however no one but a scientific historian

will care to quarrel,—that unswerving foe to all sweetness who in his struggle for light will not condescend to dress even his own blunders in an attractive garb.

It is not only the most entertaining, this form of Human Error, but it is the most harmless. There need be no alloy in our laughter at mistakes which inflict only temporary discomfiture on those who make them, and, unlike curses, come not home to roost. The boy who translates "*Vere fabis satio*" by "Truly I am full of beans," may possibly be warned to reconsider himself (and Virgil) "in a terrible *a-posteriori* manner," such as Carlyle's playful fancy anticipated for the ostrich-like Genius of England; but there the mischief begins and ends. An American printer transforms "Filtration is sometimes assisted by the use of albumen" into "Flirtation is sometimes arrested by the use of aldermen." Something more might indeed come of this; for in parts of the Union the American has a knack of making his corrections with a revolver. But the outraged author, or alderman, might not shoot straight; if he did, the editor only would suffer; and no one alas! will pretend that the world would roll less merrily for the loss of an editor.

It has come to me however to be able to make some additions to Mr. Wheatley's collection, at which, though they are comical enough in all conscience, one's laughter is not wholly mirthful. When the shepherd himself leads the sheep astray, the business grows serious. For the truth of the following blunders I can vouch. They are set down in their naked literalness, as I received them from the hands of one

of her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools, before whom they came in the exercise of his professional duties. Not a word has been altered. I take them directly from the copy furnished to me by him at my request, partly in his own, partly in his assistant's handwriting, from the official examination-papers. But first some explanation of the conditions under which the examination is held and of the status of the persons examined may be not amiss. Most of us know by sad experience that the education provided by the State for its children costs the taxpayers between five and six millions sterling annually. But not so many know by what strange ways the money goes, or to what strange issues. Perhaps as the vast majority have no choice in the matter but to pay the money and take such goods as the gods of the moment vouchsafe, they may hold this to be a case wherein ignorance should be more blissful than wisdom.

The robbed that smiles steals something from the thief.

This explanation shall be given in my friend's own words. I cannot make them clearer, and it is well there should be no suspicion of misinterpretation or extravagance.

There are "Certificate Examinations" held yearly, just before Christmas. These examinations are attended by all who wish to obtain the certificate necessary for every one to hold before he or she can take sole charge of a State-aided Elementary School. They are open to two classes of candidates: (1) *Students*, the pick of the successful pupil-teachers who go to a training-college for a two-years' course of special instruction; (2) *Acting Teachers*, or those who have not passed out of the apprenticeship sufficiently high to carry them into college, or who cannot afford the small extra expense of a college career. But these young people having passed at all, well or ill, at the end of their apprenticeship become qualified to go out as Assistant or Acting Teachers. The answers which you have in your possession were sent in at the Christmas Examination, 189— by *Female Acting Teachers* taking first-year papers, that is to say, the papers

which first-year students are bound to take as a sort of Moderations, but which Acting Teachers were then allowed to take as their final examination.

The history of these young women is briefly this. At fourteen years of age they were apprenticed, after passing a simple examination for admission, as Pupil-Teachers for four years; to serve in school for so many hours a week, and to receive special instruction from the Head Teacher regularly in the subjects of the examination through which they had to pass at the end of each of their four years. The History Course was: *first year*, to 1066; *second year*, from 1066 to 1485; *third year*, from 1485 to 1688; *fourth year*, from 1688 to the present day. All who did not actually fail in their fourth-year examination (they might fail in some subjects, but their aggregate marks reached a certain minimum) were at liberty to accept engagements at once as Assistant, or Acting Teachers. They were then required to serve for one year at least under a Certified Teacher (who, by the way, was under no obligation to instruct them), after which they voluntarily applied for leave to attend the Christmas Examination, 189—.

I may point out that none of these candidates could have been less than nineteen years old; the majority, I am told, would have been twenty-one. It was a girl of twenty-one, for instance, who when asked from what different sources Richard the First obtained money for his Crusade, made answer to this effect: "*Richard the First, surnamed Cœur de Lion, meaning Lion-Hearted, was a very powerful king. He obtained money in various ways for his Crusades who travelled a great deal.*" From the same quarter came the following lucid explanation of the particular causes which rendered Wicliff's teaching popular: "*Wicliff's teaching became very well known, and was thought a great deal of, and no doubt it came in very useful and the people were very glad of it.*" This same John Wicliff seems to have been very much of a stumbling-block, and in one head at least to have got himself strangely confused with John Wilkes, to judge by the following biographical sketch: "*Wicliff was a*

prominent member in the House of Commons. He was three times re-elected for Middlesex, but as often the Commons refused to receive him, on account of some wrong he had done in the House of Commons. He was afterwards elected a Mayor of London." But this is lucidity itself compared with the explanation given by one of the candidates of the main principles of Wolsey's foreign and domestic policy: "*The main principles of Cardinal Wolsey's foreign policy were the manners in which he attacked his enemies. In the siege of Quebec he ascended the mountains at dead of night, when his enemies were at rest, and took the town at daybreak. His home policy was conducted in a similar manner.*" The great Cardinal seems indeed to have fluttered these young imaginings even more than the great Reformer. Many and sad and strange are the reasons assigned for his downfall. "*Wolsey was found out by Henry,*" says one, "*and charged with high treason for breaching against the Act of Præmunire.*" Another, greatly daring, more than hints, in language smacking something too much of the police-court for reproduction here, that Wolsey was detected in a yet graver breach of the law in which poor Catherine of Arragon had a share. A third, perhaps more wisely, confines herself strictly to generalities, as thus: "*Wolsey's principles were both very important in foreign and in home policy. He did a very great deal of good. At last the time came when he was ruined. It was called the Fall of Wolsey. The people were very sorry when his last came, and did all in their power to save him, but it was of no use, he was too badly wounded.*"

The sky does not clear as we draw nearer to our own time. The Stuarts are as inscrutable as the Plantagenets or the Tudors, and a darkness that may be felt hangs even over the reign of good Queen Anne. Some faint idea of Raleigh seems to have shaped itself in the head of the candidate who supplied the following

biography of the last of the great Elizabethans. "*Raleigh returned and was executed on a former sentence of beheading. Before he was executed he sat down and smoked some of his tobacco. Tobacco and potatoes are since found to be very valuable to our country. He was a brave and generous man. He was very affectionate, especially towards Queen Elizabeth.*" But Hampden seems to have been as sore a puzzle as Wicliff or Wolsey, a sort of historical Cerberus, three single gentlemen rolled into one. "(1) *He was one of the Pilgrim Fathers.* (2) *He was a blacksmith who killed a tax-collector for insulting his daughter.* (3) *He figured very prominently in the reign of James the First. He refused to pay ship-money and was tried by twelve bishops. He held fast to his own rights, and though he suffered the extreme penalty, he convinced the people that James was exacting too large a sum to enrich his own person.*" The candidate who considered the chief battles of the Civil War to have been "*St. Albans, Edgehill, Bunker's Hill, and Camperdown,*" might be charitably supposed to have been suffering from a plethora of knowledge, but for the last unlucky shot. In the next answer, however, there is a vein of possibly unconscious, humour which should have gone some way to soften the examiner's wrath. The question runs: "*Both the Royalist and Parliamentary parties in the Civil War suffered from internal dissensions. Give some account of these.*" And then follows this remarkable answer: "*Both the Royalist and Parliamentary parties in the Civil War suffered from internal dissensions because, their baggage being all swept away, they were pierced with cold and hunger.*" One would be loath, I say, to press too hardly on such a humourist; yet the answer suggests grave reflections on the quality of the instruction provided in animal physiology, which is, as we shall see, a favourite subject in our State schools. Some excuse might also be found for this new reading

from the history of Queen Anne's reign. It would puzzle many of us, I suspect, who flatter ourselves on a general knowledge of our country's annals, to trace clearly at a moment's notice the causes and progress of the war of the Spanish Succession. It certainly seems to have puzzled this young student. "*England was greatly interested in the war of the Spanish Succession. It was fought between Philip the Second of Spain and the English. They both got a large number of ships together, but the Spanish were beaten in all directions although they had much the largest force. A storm was sent which destroyed a great number of the ships, and England was victorious. This led to the union of England and Scotland.*" There seems to have been a general agreement of opinion that the war was ended by the battle of Waterloo. Most of the candidates contented themselves with a bare statement of this fact; but one elaborated it with a wealth of eloquence and imagination which shows what pitfalls at all times and under all conditions await the picturesque historian. "*Napoleon had been overrunning the land during the French Revolution. He had conquered almost all except Europe, and his dream of a European Empire seemed about to be realised. The English were almost defeated, and behind the wonderful lines of Torres Vedras they passed the winter, but when they emerged next spring it was to pass from victory to victory. They now thought that there would for a time be peace in the land, but Napoleon, fresh from Dettingen and Fontenoy, came upon them, but in the ever-memorable battle of Waterloo he was totally defeated.*"

When we touch the debatable ground of literature it behoves us to tread carefully. Yet even in literature it is not all criticism; some facts there are, though it seems hard to get at them. Certain famous men did live and write and die within certain more or less clearly-defined periods of time. Their names and their works

are remembered, if the proportion of honour to be assigned to them be not immutably fixed. But to this candidate at least years are nothing; backwards and forwards they roll in the most perplexing fashion, and most confusing is the wreckage of facts they have washed into this small head. She was asked to name the chief English writers of the reign of Queen Anne, and to give a short account of the life and work of one of them. This was her answer: "*The reign of Queen Anne has been called the Augustan Age. The chief writers of this period were—Shakespeare, Chaucer, Dryden, Ben Jonson, Goldsmith, and Sir Walter Scott.*" An Augustan Age indeed! But some credit should at least be given to the ingenuity which could frame so splendid a list of names without including one that should by rights be on it. It may match with that of the schoolboy (not in a State-school) who is said to have contrived to spell the word *wife* without using one of its proper letters. Shakespeare was the writer selected by our young friend for further details, which were, to say the least, meagre. His life was, perhaps wisely, left altogether in obscurity; nor did the record of his work travel beyond "*To be or not to be,*" "*The Moor of Athens,*" and "*Dombey and Son.*"

My list is not exhausted, but it is perhaps long enough. I will add to it only two more instances, curious mainly as illustrating a sort of minds with which our system of education has to work, or, it may be, a condition into which it brings them. It is a custom at the yearly examinations (not the final one with which we have hitherto been concerned) to exercise the candidates in what is known as composition. Some well-known historical episode, or anecdote, told in the simplest language, is read twice over to them slowly and distinctly, and they are then required to reproduce it in writing, in their own style and language, or in so much of the original as their memory has been able to

preserve. At the examination in question the story chosen was that of Wolfe repeating to his officers Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," as he was rowed at midnight up the Saint Lawrence to the landing-place below the Heights of Abraham, and his famous verdict on the poem. Wolfe's presence in Canada was explained, the purpose of the war, and the positions of the two armies, the narrative concluding with a short account of the battle and of Wolfe's death. This is how it was reproduced by a pupil-teacher in her first year: "*Wolfe was once in Canada. Whilst he was there he observed an elegy in a churchyard.*" My last instance comes from the final examination, and is shorter, if not sweeter. The girl (she was between twenty and twenty-one years old) was asked to give an account of the No Popery, or Gordon Riots. "*The King said there should be no Pope,*" was her answer.

It is all entertaining enough in its way no doubt, but the entertainment is something costly. We are not of course to suppose that nothing better than this comes from our golden millions, nor even that this nonsense represents the educational or intellectual average of our State-schools. That average is by all accounts not high, nor is it in reason to expect that it should be high; but a careful search would doubtless reveal some balance at least to the credit side of the account. What is still more to the purpose is that, since the examinations I have been dealing with, the standard of efficiency has been raised and the certificate of teachership is not now to be so easily won. It is not necessary to specify the precise nature of all the changes effected, which (if I may judge from my own feelings) might not be very easily followed by the lay reader. Every business has its own jargon, which it is not always easy to translate for the general comprehension. One however will be sufficiently intelligible, and it is perhaps the most important.

Formerly, as I have said, though a candidate might fail in any one subject, or conceivably in more than one, yet if the aggregate of his, or her, marks touched the required limit, the certificate was assured. Thus, we may assume that the candidates whose answers we have been considering must have failed in history. Yet it is quite possible that some of them at least, if not all, may have gained the necessary aggregate of marks, and would therefore have received the certificate of teachership; and among the subjects they would thus be qualified to teach would be English history. But as matters now stand, the candidate who fails in any subject has to be specially examined in that subject, and to pass in it, before the certificate is granted.

So far, so good. But no change in the scheme of examination, however salutary, can soften the appalling fact that among the class from which the teachers of the rising generations are drawn are individuals whom years of special training are unable to advance to any higher standard of knowledge than that we have been contemplating. It is hardly indeed a question of knowledge, of intellectual gifts or accomplishments; it seems almost a question of sheer intelligence, of the mental quality which distinguishes the human from the brute. When, remembering the circumstances and conditions in which they were produced, we consider some of the answers quoted above, their fatuity is so amazing, so profound, that one cannot but wonder whether in sober truth they emanated from creatures endowed with the intelligent and reasoning faculties of human beings. But on the heels of this treads another question. Are these pupils or their teachers most to blame? Are the former absolutely devoid of the capacity for acquiring any sort of knowledge; or do the latter fail in that most vital qualification for all teachers, the art of discovering what form of knowledge the pupil is best fitted by nature to acquire, and the art of imparting that

knowledge in the form best adapted to his intelligence! In other and plainer words, does the teacher know what to teach and how to teach it?

Not every man,—and let me here be permitted to say, without insulting the self-respect of the female sex, which appears at present to be in a slightly irritable condition, that, to avoid a confusion of pronouns, in the man I would, for present purposes, include the whole human race—not every man, I say, can with Bacon take all knowledge for his province. And the province of knowledge open to that section of the community whose capacities we are just now considering is likely, it must be obvious, to be somewhat strictly bounded by natural and other causes. Perhaps for the majority of them some form of education analogous to the fine old Persian rule would be most salutary and sufficient. *To ride, to draw the bow, and to speak the truth*: it was fine training, and produced fine citizens; and when one considers all that such a curriculum implies, fine citizens it should produce now. But we must remember that the wisdom of our statesmen and politicians has ordained that in the hands of these rising generations shall lie the future of this great Empire. They are to decide who shall make our laws for us, and what those laws shall be. It is vital therefore on all accounts, and for all sakes, that they be trained for this great duty in the best possible manner; boys and girls alike, for who shall say that when our girls that now are have arrived at maturity they will not find themselves called to a share of this solemn responsibility. Excellent therefore as was the old system, which was found sufficient for the Persia of King Cyrus, we must suppose it to be not quite illuminating and comprehensive enough for the England of Queen Victoria and of Mr. Gladstone.

Up to a certain point of course the teachers have little choice left to them. Reading, writing, the simple rules of arithmetic, and some instruction in history, geography, and the

English language form the education of the younger pupils; needlework is added for the girls and drawing for the boys, both, it is to be presumed, being confined to their most elementary states. That is well enough; if these things are taught simply and clearly, such a scheme of education for such pupils could not easily be bettered. Nor are these wholesome subjects neglected in the higher standards; but hand in hand with them there go others less wholesome, and now begins the confusion. In these standards a special subject is added to the regular curriculum, and the choice of this subject depends solely on the good sense of the teacher. One hesitates to bring a general charge against a body of men who at least work hard for no very abundant wage, and whose misfortune it is perhaps rather than their fault that their work is not always conducted on the best lines nor leads to the best results. But certainly in the choice of these special subjects good sense would not seem to be the ruling motive. The time of course must bear its part of the blame, which reverses the old rule, *non multa sed multum*, and holds it better to teach a little of everything, no matter how superficially, than to teach a few things thoroughly. The choice therefore ranges at its wild will over all the heavens above and the earth beneath, and the waters that are under the earth; the sciences, languages, agriculture, animal physiology, mechanics, magnetism, electricity,—through these wide fields the teacher drags his puzzled pupils, (himself perhaps with not the clearest head) regardless of their age, condition, or prospects. I have before me a paper of questions set in animal physiology to girls between the ages of twelve and fourteen.

1. Write what you know of the intestines, their structure and functions.
2. Describe the pulmonary or lesser circulation.

3. Explain,—artery, vein, oxygen, mastication, osmosis, respiration.

4. Draw a diagram of the stomach. Describe its position, structure, and functions.

I have not the answers to these questions, and perhaps it is as well that I have not. When one reflects on the genius for blundering shown in such comparatively simple matters as history and literature the possibilities offered by the intricacies of the human stomach are appalling. And after all to make merry over these poor little heads tormented into nonsense by the folly of their elders is but a sorry business; 'tis a merriment too much akin to the crackling of thorns under a pot. Conceive rather the state of mind which can prescribe such questions for girls of such an age and such conditions, and then let those laugh who can.

It is but a truism to say that the value of all education, from the highest to the lowest, from our universities to our Sunday schools, depends as much upon the way in which a thing is taught as upon the thing itself. It is not indeed all and always a paradox to say that even more depends on the style than on the subject. Many a subject not itself of first-rate importance can in skilful hands be made the channel of much useful and stimulating knowledge; while the best possible system can be rendered naught by inefficient or inadequate teaching. If this be so in our universities and public schools (and no man with any experience of them will, I suppose, deny that it is so), how much more must it be the case in societies such as those we are considering? Far be it from me to say that all the teaching in our State schools is inefficient. A good workman will always do something even with the worst tools. But from all I have learned (and I have been fortunate both in the experience and the intelligence of my authorities) I am forced to the conclusion that the system of instruction ordained by our parental government is for the most part both ill-con-

ceived and ill-executed. It is based upon a wrong principle, and it is imparted through precarious and inadequate ways. How indeed can it well be otherwise? We have seen from what quarters no small part of our teachers are drawn and what is the fashion of their equipment. It is inevitable that even in the compulsory subjects of instruction many of them can be but a little ahead of their pupils; it must be obvious that in the optional subjects very few indeed, either intellectually or by training, are fit to exercise an independent choice. They rely, and they can only rely, on little books specially prepared to supply their own deficiencies at the least possible expense of time and toil. In a word, they are teaching others what they have not themselves learned in the only way that learning can be made of any real worth. The printed page tells them what to say and, like Montaigne's parrot, they say it. Why they should so say it, what it means when said, or what may be its particular relation to the general subject, they clearly do not know, nor seek to know; nor in too many cases does such knowledge seem to be thought necessary or even expedient. The book is to them what the Articles of War were to Midshipman Easy before a larger experience of the world had taught Equality Jack to distinguish between the letter and the spirit. Here again it would be manifestly unfair to lay a general indictment from particular instances. I am quite willing to suppose that some of these text-books are all that such things should be, or at least all that they can be. But it is clear that some at all events are hopelessly astray in their manner of justifying their existence; and with all of them, even the best, it is clear that the reason of their existence, their standard of utility, is the examination. In this respect of course our State-schools are not peculiar. They but share in the general reproach of our universal scheme of education,

a reproach which was sooner or later inevitable when the world consented to be governed by the examiner. The shadow of that fateful figure darkens man's path in life from the cradle almost to the grave. This however is neither the place nor time to balance the good and ill of a system which contains so much of both, and which seems as certain as human things can be to endure unchanged through this generation at least. Without then beginning an unavailing discussion, I will give an instance of this sort of parrot-learning, taken at random from our government text-books. In that matter of obtaining money for the Crusades, which we have elsewhere heard of, the book teaches that Richard had been willing to sell London itself *could he have found a chapman*. The unknown word caught the pupils' fancy, on that principle, as old as humanity, which Tacitus has crystallised into one pregnant sentence, and reappeared as a *chaplain*, a *chapter*, a *captain*, and so on. What the meaning of the sentence might be there was no thought, nor apparently any effort to explain it; but the unfamiliar word had something of a familiar sound, and each candidate reproduced that sound as nearly as his little stock of learning allowed. From this, which is but one of many hundred similar instances that the text-books could furnish, it is not hard to trace the source of an inexhaustible harvest of blunders.

The modern system of education appears to be based on the principle that it is possible for everybody to learn everything. We look down the roll of great names illuminating the pages of the world's history in every department of mental activity, and in our pride we argue that if such things were done in times when the appliances for learning were few, laborious, and costly, and when men were for the most part left to order their private lives after their own devices, what should not be possible now when a beneficent government

has ordained that every citizen shall get knowledge under peril of the law. In Swift's ideal world he was held for the greatest benefactor of his race who could show them how to grow two blades of corn where one had grown before. What a benefactor then must he be who can show men how to turn out Bacons and Newtons and Humboldts by the score. We appear to conceive of education as of a sort of electric light; press a button, and the darkest place shall be made bright as noonday. But we forget how infinitesimal a part of the human species the great names really represent. The general human intelligence is dull and slow, and the vast majority of men capable of learning very little. It is too with the mind as with the body; the intellectual constitution is not framed after one universal pattern any more than is the physical constitution, and the digestive powers of the brain vary even as the digestive powers of the stomach.

Any teaching, said Kingsley, which involves moral discipline is better than mere anarchy and idleness; and he said well. Yet it is at least a moot point whether too much education be not more fruitful of harm than too little. On certain classes of minds in certain classes of society there can, I think, be little doubt that our present forcing-system does act injuriously. It fills the victim with crude fragments of knowledge which he is not really capable of assimilating, thereby unfitting him for the work he was born to do without enabling him to supply its place, and so inevitably breeding restlessness, discontent, disaffection. This is the worst; a less vicious result, though pitiful enough, is where the slow heavy brain, loaded beyond what it can bear, is unable to work at all, and the little that might possibly have been learned is lost for ever. But it is unavailing to complain. Our legislators have decided in their wisdom that these things shall be, and hardly at least in this generation

whatever change may come is it likely to come from a reactionary quarter. Nor in truth could the most ruthless philanthropist find it in his heart to suggest a new theme for legislation to a Government already so amply provided that way, even were there reason to suppose its masters would suffer it to entertain a scheme which would certainly tend to make the mass of the population more intelligent and less discontented. But the heads and hands of the Education Department are within certain limits free, and there at all events intelligence and discernment should not be wanting. The system they cannot alter, but something they can surely do to restrain it within due bounds and lessen its possibilities of harm. They can, I suppose, up to a certain point prescribe the nature of the subjects to be taught and the form in which they shall be taught. They cannot need to be told that electricity, magnetism, and animal physiology are not subjects likely to make young girls, whose natural home is the dairy, the kitchen, or the work-room, good wives and mothers, or even fit them to exercise the duties of citizenship if the time shall ever come to them for the exercise. They must surely know that English history and English literature, subjects in themselves so wholesome and stimulating, can only be made so in our State-schools by being taught in the simplest and most direct form; and, question or answer, it matters not, they have but to glance at the papers sent up to them from any school under their charge to find

ample means of satisfying themselves that such is not the form in which these subjects are taught. Let them take an instance from that paper on English history, which has furnished us with our appendix to Mr. Wheatley. "Henry the Seventh ascended the throne with a Parliamentary title. What precedents were there for the regulation by Parliament of the succession to the crown?" What idea do they suppose to be conveyed to girls of nineteen, so born and bred as these have been, by such phrases as *Parliamentary titles* and *Parliamentary precedents*? Let them look at that answer intended to explain the main principles of Wolsey's foreign and home policy, and ask themselves what manner of meaning its author can have attached to the words *principle* and *policy*. To teach in such wise is but to fill hungry bellies with the east wind.

These gentleman, I say, have all of them received the best education this country can provide, and there is no country on the face of the globe can provide better; their very presence in the Department shows that they must have profited by it. They know what the great minds of the world have thought of education, what it really means, to what issues it should tend. Let them use their knowledge now, and do at least what lies in their power to prevent this great instrument for good and evil from being a laughing-stock and a cause of stumbling in the present, and in the future a possible source of endless lamentation and mourning and woe.

